

MORAL TALES.

BY
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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I. .

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ORIGINAL PREFACE.

HAVING been engaged some time since in writing upon comedy, I searched into nature for the rules and means of the art. This study led me to examine if it were true, as has been said, that all the great strokes of ridicule had been seized by Moliere, and the poets who have followed him.

In running over the canvas of society, I thought I perceived, that in the inexhaustible combinations of follies and extravagancies of all conditions, a man of genius might still find sufficient employment. I had even collected some observations to propose to young poets, when my friend, M^e de Boissi, desired me to supply him with some pieces in prose, to insert in the Mercure. It came into my head to make use, in a tale, of one of the strokes in my collection, and I chose, by way of essay, the ridiculous pretension of being loved merely for one's self. This tale had all the success that such a trifling could have. My friend desired me to give him a second. I proposed to myself to display the folly of those who use authority to bring a woman to reason; and I chose for an example a sultan and his slave, as being the two extremes of power and dependence. This fresh essay also succeeded, and, pleased with having hit the taste of the public in a species of writing which they deigned to look upon as new, I continued to exercise myself in it.

I shall say little concerning the style; when it is I that speak I deliver myself up to the actual impression of the sentiment or image which I mean to present. my subject furnishes me with the manner. When I make my characters speak, all the art I employ is to fancy myself present at their conversation, and to write down what I imagine I hear. In general, the most simple imitation of nature, in the manners and lan-

guage, is what I have endeavoured in these tales; if they have not this merit, they have none.

I proposed, some years since, under the article Dialogue, in the Encyclopedia, to banish the *said he*, and *said she*, from lively and animated dialogue. I have made the experiment in these tales, and I think it has succeeded. This manner of rendering the narration more rapid is uncouth only at first; as soon as we are accustomed to it, it makes the talent of reading well appear with greater lustre.

The success which the story of Soliman has had upon the stage, as treated by a gentleman who writes with much ease and elegance, permits me to hope that the same use will be made of some of these little pictures of human life; and for the future I shall employ myself (as I have done in the three new tales, *The Good Husband*, *The Connoisseur*, and *School of Fathers*) in chusing stories easy to be brought upon the stage, in order to give authors less trouble.



MORAL TALES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

Alcibiades, or Self.

NATURE and fortune seemed to have conspired towards the happiness of Alcibiades. Riches, talents, person, birth, the flower of youth, and of health; what titles for the possession of every foppery! Alcibiades had but one; he wanted to be loved for himself only. From the lightest coquette up to the greatest prude, he had seduced every female in Athens----but in loving him, was it really *himself* that they loved? This whimsical piece of delicacy seized him one morning as he was just come from paying his court to a prude: this is the moment for reflection. The thoughts of Alcibiades turned upon what is called the *sentimental*, the *metaphysics* of love. ‘*Keep* a pretty fool,’ said he, ‘to throw away my attention on a woman who perhaps loves me only for her own sake! I will know the truth of it, by all the gods! and if that be the case, she may look out among our prize-fighters for a lover to serve in my place.’

The charming prude, according to custom, still opposed some feeble resistance to the desires of Alcibiades. It was a dreadful affair! she could not even think of it without blushing! it was necessary to be smitten as deeply as she was, in order to come to such a resolution! She could have wished for all the world that he were less young and less pressing! Alcibiades took her at her word. ‘I perceive, Madam,’ said he one day, ‘that these compliments cost you dear. Well, I am determined to give you a proof of the most perfect love. Yes, I consent, since you will have it so, that our souls only may be united, and I give you my word that I will ask nothing more.’

The prude commended this resolution with an air sufficient to have destroyed it. Alcibiades, however,

kept to the text. She was surprised and piqued ; but was obliged to dissemble.

The day following, every temptation which the most enchanting dishabille could afford was made use of. The liveliness of desire sparkled in her eyes ; a voluptuous negligence in her air. The slightest covering, the most favourable disorder, every thing about her invited Alcibiades to forget himself. He perceived the snare. ‘ What a victory,’ said he to her, ‘ Madam ! what a victory have I now to gain over myself ! I see plainly that Love is putting me to the trial, and I am glad of it. The delicacy of my sentiments shall appear with greater lustre. These coverings, so thin and transparent ; these couches of which Pleasure herself seems to have formed her throne ; your beauty & my desires ; how many enemies are these to subdue ! Ulysses could not have escaped them ; Hercules would have fallen before them. I will be wiser than Ulysses, and less frail than Hercules. Yes, I will convince you, that the single pleasure of loving can take place of all other pleasures.’—‘ You are a charming creature,’ said she ; ‘ and I may pride myself in having a very extraordinary lover ! all I dread is, lest your passion should be weakened by its rigour.’—‘ On the contrary,’ interrupted Alcibiades briskly, ‘ it will only become more ardent.’—‘ But, my dear child, you are young ; there are moments when we are not masters of ourselves ; and I should think your fidelity in great danger, if I were to deliver you up to your desires.’—‘ Be easy, Madam, I will be answerable for every thing. If I can conquer my desires towards you, who is there towards whom I shall not be master of them?’—‘ You promise me at least,’ said she, ‘ that if they become too violent, you will fairly confess it ? Do not let any mistaken bashfulness restrain you. Do not pique yourself on keeping your word with me : there is nothing I would sooner pardon you, than an instance of infidelity.’—‘ Yes, Madam, I will confess my weakness to you with the greatest sincerity in the world, whenever I am ready to yield

yield to it: but suffer me, at least, to try my own strength; I feel that it will yet go a great way, and I hope that love will give me new force.' The prude was now quite enraged; but, without giving herself the lye, she could not complain. She still checked herself, in hopes that on a new trial Alcibiades would give way. He received the day after, as soon as he awoke, a billet conceived in these terms---

"I HAVE passed a most cruel night; come to see me! I cannot live without you!"

He arrives at the prude's. Her window-curtains were but half open: a gentle day stole into the apartment on waves of purple. The prude was yet in a bed girted with roses. 'Come,' said she to him, with a plaintive voice; 'come, and ease my finquie-tudes. A frightful dream has disturbed me all night. I thought I saw you at the feet of a rival. Oh! I shudder at it even yet; I have already told you, Alcibiades, that I cannot live under the apprehensions of your proving unfaithful; my misfortune would be the more cutting, as I should myself be the cause; and I would at least have nothing to reproach myself. It is in vain for you to promise me that you will subdue yourself; you are too young to be able to do so long. Do I not know you? I perceive that I have required too much of you; I am sensible that it is imprudent and cruel to impose such hard terms on you.' As she spoke these words with the most touching air in the world, Alcibiades threw himself at her feet. 'I am very unhappy, Madam,' said he, 'if you have not a sufficient esteem for me, to believe me capable of attaching myself to you by the ties of sentiment only! After all, of what have I deprived myself? Of that which is a dishonour to love. I blush to see that you set any value on such a sacrifice. But were it as great as you imagine it, I should but have the more glory.'--'No, my dear Alcibiades,' said the prude, giving him at the same time her hand. 'I wish not for a sacrifice that

that costs you so dear : I am too well assured and too much pleased, with the pure and delicate love you have so fully testified for me. Be happy ; I consent to it.'---' I am so, Madam,' cried he, ' in the pleasure of living for you. Cease to suspect and complain of me ; you see before you the most faithful, most tender, and most respectful of lovers,'---' And the foolishest !' interrupted she, drawing the curtains roughly, and calling to her slaves. Alcibiades fell out in a rage, to find that he had loved only like another man, and fully resolved never more to see a woman who had taken him merely for her own pleasure. ' It is not thus,' said he, ' that we love in the age of innocence ; and if the young Glycerium should feel for me what her eyes seem to declare, I am very certain it must be love in its utmost purity.'

Glycerium, just fifteen years, began already to excite the wishes of the handsomest young men. Let us form to ourselves the image of a rose-bud just opening ; such were the freshness and splendor of her beauty.

Alcibiades presented himself, and his rivals disappeared. It was not yet the custom at Athens to marry, in order to hate and despise one another the next day ; but they gave the young folks time, before wedlock, to see and converse with each other with a becoming freedom : the young ladies did not commit the care of their virtue to their guardians : they were discreet of themselves. Modesty did not begin to make a feeble resistance, till after it was robbed of the honours of victory. Glycerium's made the handsomest defence. Alcibiades omitted nothing to surprise or win her. He extolled the young Athenian lady for her talents, her graces, her beauty ; he made her perceive in every thing she said, a refinement she never meant to give it, and a delicacy of which she had not so much as thought. What a pity, that with so many charms she was not endowed with a sensible heart ! ' I adore you ;' said he to her, ' and I am happy if you love me ! Do not be afraid to tell me so ; an ingenuous candour is the virtue

tue peculiar to your age. It is in vain that they have given the name of prudence to dissimulation : that beautiful mouth is not made to disguise the sentiments of your heart ; let it rather be the organ of Love, since it was for himself that he formed it.'--' If you would have me be sincere,' replied Glycerium, with a modesty mingled with tenderness, ' contrive at least that I may be so without blushing. I would not disguise the sentiments of my heart, neither would I violate my duty ; and I should betray either the one or the other, if I were to say more.' Glycerium wished that their marriage should be agreed upon before she explained herself. Alcibiades wanted her to explain herself before they should think of marriage. ' It will be a fine time, indeed,' said he, ' to assure me of your love, when marriage shall have made it a duty, and I shall have reduced you to the necessity of counterfeiting : it is now that you are free, it would please me to hear from that mouth the disinterested confession of a natural and pure sentiment.'--' Well, then, be content, and reproach me not with wanting a sensible heart ; it has at least been so since I have seen you. I esteem you sufficiently to trust you with the secret of my heart ; but now it has escaped me, I ask one favour of you : it is, not to request any more private interviews, till you have adjusted the affair with those on whom I depend.' The confession which Alcibiades had just obtained would have completed the happiness of any other less difficult lover ; but his whim still possessed him. He wanted still to see whether he was loved for *himself*, ' I will not conceal from you,' said he, ' that the offer which I am going to make, may not be attended with success. Your relations received me with a cold civility, which I should have taken for a dismission, if the pleasure which I have in seeing you had not overcome my delicacy ; but if I oblige your father to explain himself, there will no longer be any room for dissembling. He is a member of the Areopagus : Socrates, the most virtuous of men, is there suspected and

and odious ; I am the friend and disciple of Socrates, and I greatly fear that the hatred they have for him may extend to me. My apprehensions, perhaps, carry me too far ; but, at least, if your father sacrifice us to his politics, if he refuses to give me your hand, what do you determine to do ? --- ' To be unhappy,' replied Glycerium ; ' and to submit to my destiny.' --- ' You will see me then no more ? ' --- ' If they forbid me to see you, I must obey.' --- ' You will obey then, also, if they promise another husband to you ? ' --- ' I shall become the victim of my duty.' --- ' And but of duty, likewise, you will love the husband they shall chuse for you ? ' --- ' I shall endeavour not to hate him. But what questions you put to me ! What would you think of me yourself, if I entertained any other sentiments ? ' --- ' That you loved me as you ought to love me.' --- ' It is too true that I do love you.' --- ' No, Glycerium ! Love knows no law ; he is above all obstacles : but to do you justice, this sentiment is too great for your age. It requires firm and courageous souls, whom difficulties animate, and ill-fortune does not shock. Such a passion, I confess, is rare. To wish for an estate, a name, and a fortune, at one's disposal ; to throw one's self, in short, into the arms of a husband, to protect one against one's parents ; this is what is now called love, but what I call a desire of independence.'

' This is downright tyranny,' said Glycerium, with tears in her eyes, ' to add injury to reproaches ! I have said nothing to you but what was tender and honest. Did I balance one moment to sacrifice my lovers to you ? Did I hesitate to confess to you your triumph ? What is it you ask farther of me ? ' --- ' I ask of you,' said he, ' to swear to me a constancy proof against every thing ; to swear to me, that you will be mine, whatever happens ; and that you will be only mine.' --- ' Indeed, Sir,' said she, ' that is what I will never do.' --- ' Indeed, Madam, I ought to have expected this answer, and I blush that I have exposed myself to it.' At these words he retired, transported with anger, and saying

faying to himself---‘ I was well set to work to fall in love with a child, who has no soul, and whose heart disposes of itself only by the advice of her parents.’

There was in Athens a young widow who appeared inconsolable for the loss of her husband. Alcibiades paid her, as all the world did, his first devoirs, with that grave air which decorum enjoins towards persons afflicted. The widow found a sensible consolation in the discourses of this disciple of Socrates, and Alcibiades an inexpiable charm in the tears of the widow. Their moral discourses, however, grew more lively every day. They joined in praises on the good qualities of the deceased, and agreed as to his bad ones. He was the honestest man in the world! but his understanding, strictly speaking, was but ordinary. He had a pretty good figure, but without elegance or grace: full of attention and care, but his assiduity was tiresome. In short, she was in despair for having lost so good a husband, but fully resolved not to take a second. ‘ What,’ said Alcibiades, ‘ at your age renounce matrimony!--I confess to you,’ said the widow, ‘ that as averse as I am to slavery, yet liberty frightens me as much. At my age, delivered up to my own guidance, and being quite independent, what will become of me?’ Alcibiades failed not to insinuate, that between the bondage of matrimony and the abandoned state of widowhood, there was a middle path; and that with respect to decorums, nothing in the world was easier to be reconciled to them than a tender attachment. She was startled at the proposition; she had rather die! ‘ Die at the age of loves and graces!’ It was easy to shew the ridiculousness of such a project, and the widow dreaded nothing so much as ridicule. It was resolved, therefore, that she should not die; it was decided, that she could not even live without being protected by somebody; this somebody could be only a lover; and, without prejudice, she knew no man more worthy than Alcibiades to please and attach her. He redoubled his assiduities: at first she complained of them;

in a short time she accustomed herself to them ; at length she asked the meaning of them ; and to avoid all imprudence, they settled matters decently.

Alcibiades was now at the pinnacle of his desires. It was neither the pleasures of love, nor the advantages of matrimony, that were to be loved in him ; it was he himself, at least he imagined so. He triumphed over the grief, prudence and pride of a woman, who required nothing in return but secrecy and love. The widow, on her side, plumed herself on holding under her dominion the object of the jealousy of all the beauties of Greece. But how few persons know how to enjoy without a confidante ! Alcibiades, while a lover in secret, was only a common lover like another man ; and the greatest triumph is no farther pleasing, than in proportion as it is public. An author has said, that it is not enough to be in a fine country, if we have no one whom we can say to---‘ What a fine country !’ The widow found, in like manner, that it was not sufficient to have Alcibiades for a lover, if she could not tell any one---‘ I have Alcibiades for a lover.’ She communicated it therefore in confidence to an intimate friend, who communicated it again to her lover, and he to all Greece. Alcibiades, astonished that his adventure was become public, thought it his duty to acquaint the widow of it, who accused him of indiscretion. ‘ If I were capable of any such thing,’ said he, ‘ I should suffer those reports to prevail, which I had been desirous of propagating ; but I wish for nothing so much as to stifle them. Let us be upon our guard : let us avoid meeting in public ; and whenever accident may happen to bring us together, be not offended at the strange and careless air I shall affect towards you.’ The widow received all this but very indifferently. ‘ I perceive, indeed,’ said she, ‘ that you will be the more at ease for it : assiduities and attention confine you too much, and you ask nothing better than the power of wandering. But for me, what sort of a countenance would you have me put on ? I know not how to act the coquette

edquette : weary of every thing in your absence, pen-
five and embarrassed before you, I shall have the ap-
pearance of being trifled with ; and, in fact, perhaps
shall be so. If they are persuaded that you possess me,
there is no remedy : the world is not to be brought
back. Where will be the good, then, of this pretended
mystery ? We shall have the appearance, you of a
disengaged lover, I of a forsaken mistress.' This an-
swer from the widow surprised Alcibiades : her conduct
compleated his astonishment. Day after day she gave
herself greater freedoms and liberty : at any public
show she expected that he should be seated behind her,
and that he should hand her to the temple, and be of
the party in her walks and suppers. She affected above
all things to have him among her rivals ! and in the
midst of them it was her pleasure that he should see
nobody but her : she commanded him in an absolute
tone of voice, viewed him with an eye of mystery,
smiled at him with an air of meaning, and whispered
him in the ear with that familiarity which betrays to
the world the connexion there is between two persons.
He saw plainly that she led him every where like a
slave chained to her car. ' I have taken airs for sen-
timents,' said he with a sigh ; ' it is not myself that
she loves ; it is the glory of having conquered me ; she
would despise me if she had no rivals. Let me teach
her, that vanity is unworthy to fix love.'

The envy of the philosophers could not forgive So-
crates, that he taught nothing in public but truth and
virtue : they preferred every day to the Areopagus the
heaviest complaints against this dangerous citizen. So-
crates, employed in doing good, let them say all the
harm of him they thought proper ; but Alcibiades, de-
voted to Socrates, opposed his enemies. He presented
himself before the magistrates ; he reproached them with
listening to base persons, and countenancing impostors ;
and spoke of his master as the justest and wisest of
mortals. Enthusiasm creates eloquence : in the confer-
ences which he had with one of the members of the

Areopagus, in presence of the wife of the judge, he spoke with so much sweetness and vehemence, with so much sense and reason, his beauty glowed with a fire so noble and affecting, that this virtuous woman was affected to the bottom of her soul. She took her perturbation for admiration. ‘ Socrates,’ said she to her spouse, ‘ is really a divine man, if he makes such disciples. I am charmed with the eloquence of this young man: it is impossible to hear him without improvement.’ The magistrate, who was far from doubting the prudence of his wife, informed Alcibiades of the praises she bestowed on him. Alcibiades was pleased with them, and asked the husband’s permission to cultivate the esteem of his wife. The good man invited him to his house. ‘ My wife,’ said he, ‘ is a philosopher too, and I should be very glad to see you disputing together.’ Rhodope, (for that was the name of this respectable matron) prided herself, indeed, on her philosophy: and that of Socrates from the mouth of Alcibiades pleased her more and more. I forgot to mention that she was of that age in which women are past being pretty, but in which they may be still reckoned *handsome*; in which perhaps they are a little less lovely, but in which they know better how to love. Alcibiades paid his devoirs to her. She distrusted neither him nor herself. The study of wisdom filled up all their conversations: the lessons of Socrates passed from the soul of Alcibiades into that of Rhodope, and in their passage gathered new charms: it was a rivulet of pure waterunning over flowers. Rhodope became every day more changed: she accustomed herself to define, according to the principles of Socrates, wisdom and virtue, truth and justice. Friendship came in its turn; and, after examining its essence—‘ I should be glad,’ said Rhodope, ‘ to know what difference Socrates makes between love and friendship?’—‘ Though Socrates is not one of those philosophers,’ replied Alcibiades, ‘ who analyse every thing, yet he distinguishes three sorts of love: ~~the~~ one gross and base, which is common to us with other

other animals ; that is to say, the impulse of necessity, and the relish of pleasure. The other pure and celestial, by which we approach the gods ; and this is the most ardent and tender friendship. Lastly, the third, which participates of the two first, preserves the medium between the gods and the brutes, and seems the most natural to man ; this is the union of souls cemented by that of the senses.'

' Socrates gives the preference to the poor charm of Friendship : but as he thinks it no crime in nature to contain spirit united to matter, so he thinks it none in man to favour of this mixture in his inclinations and pleasures. Above all, when Nature has taken pains to unite a fine person with a fine soul, he would have us respect the work of Nature : for however ill-favoured Socrates may be himself, he does justice to beauty. If he knew for example, with whom I hold these discourses concerning philosophy, I make no doubt but he would reproach me for having so ill employed my lessons.' --- ' A truce with your gallantry,' interrupted Rhodope, ' I am talking to a sage ; and young as he is, my wish is, that he would instruct, and not flatter me ! Let us return to the principles of your master. He permits love, you say, but does he know its errors and excesses ? ' --- ' Yes, Madam, as he knows those of drunkenness, and nevertheless allows the use of wine.' --- ' The comparison is not just,' said Rhodope ; ' we may chuse our wines, and moderate the use of them : have we the same liberty in love ? It is without choice or measure.' --- ' Yes, without doubt,' rejoined Alcibiades, ' in a man without morals or principles ; but Socrates begins by making men wise and virtuous, and it is to them only that he permits love. He well knows that they will love nothing but what is honest, and there we run no risque of loving to excel.' The mutual inclination of two virtuous souls cannot but render them still more virtuous.' Every answer of Alcibiades removed some difficulty in the mind of Rhodope, and rendered her inclination for him more insinuating

and rapid. There remained now only conjugal fidelity, and there was the Gordian knot. Rhodope was not one of those with whom one might cut it, there was a necessity for undoing it for her; Alcibiades sounded her at a distance. As they were one day upon the subject of society---‘Necessity,’ said Alcibiades, ‘has united mankind, common interest has regulated their duties, and the abuses of them have produced laws. All this is sacred; but all this is foreign to our soul. As men are connected but externally, the mutual duties which they impose upon each other pass not beyond the surface. Nature alone is the legislator of the heart: she alone can inspire with gratitude, friendship and love. Sentiment cannot be a duty by institution. Thence comes it, for example, that in marriage we can neither promise nor require any more than corporal attachment.’ Rhodope who had relished the principle, was terrified at the consequence. ‘What,’ said she, ‘could I have promised my husband only to behave as if I loved him!...’ What else was it in your power to promise him?’ ‘To love him in reality,’ replied she, in a very indeterminate tone of voice. ‘He has promised you, then, in his turn, to be not only amiable, but of all men the most amiable in your eyes?’...‘He has promised me to do all in his power towards it, and he keeps his word.’...‘Very well, you also do all in your power to love him only: yet neither the one nor the other of you are sure of success.’...‘This is frightful philosophy!’ cried Rhodope. ‘Happily, Madam, it is not so frightful: there would be too many criminals, if conjugal love were an essential duty.’...‘What, Sir! do you doubt it?’...‘I doubt nothing, Madam, but my frankness may displease you, and I do not see you disposed to imitate it. I thought I was speaking to a philosopher, but I find I was speaking only to a woman of a lively genius. I retire, confounded at my mistake; but I would give you at parting an instance of sincerity. I believe I have morals as pure, as honest, & the most virtuous woman; I know, too, full as well

as she, to what the honour and religion of an oath engages us; I know the laws of marriage, and the crime of violating them: however had I married a thousand women, I should not have reproached myself in the least for thinking you alone handsomer, and a thousand times more amiable, than these thousand women put together. According to you, in order to be virtuous, we must have neither heart nor eyes; I congratulate you on being arrived at such a degree of perfection!"

This discourse pronounced with a tone of vexation and anger, left Rhodope in an astonishment from which she had some difficulty to recover. From that time Alcibiades discontinued his visits. She had discovered in his adieus a warmer interest than that occasioned by the heat of the dispute: she perceived on her own side, that the loss of his philosophical conferences was not what she regretted most. A dislike of every thing, a disgust to herself, a secret repugnance to the attentions of her husband; lastly, the confusion and blushes which the name alone of Alcibiades created. All these things made her dread the danger of seeing him again; and yet she burned with the desire of seeing him once more. Her husband brought him back to her. As she had given him to understand, that they had differed a little in a dispute concerning words, the magistrate rallied Alcibiades on it, and obliged him to return. The interview was grave; the husband amused himself with it some time; but his affairs soon called him away. 'I leave you,' said he to them; 'and I hope, that after having quarrelled about words, you will come to a reconciliation upon things.' The good man meant no harm: but his wife could not help blushing for him.

After a pretty long silence, Alcibiades began---'Our conferences, Madam, were once my delight; and with all the tendency imaginable to dissipation, you had taught me to relish and prefer the charms of solitude. I was no longer one of the world, I was no longer myself, I was wholly and entirely yours. Think not that a foolish hope of seducing and leading you

astray had stolen into my soul : virtue, much more than wit and beauty, had enslaved me to your laws. But loving you with a passion as delicate as it was tender, I flattered myself that I should have inspired you with the like. This pure and virtuous love offends you, or rather is only troublesome to you ; for it is impossible that you should condemn it in reality. All that I feel for you, Madam, you yourself feel for another, you have confessed it to me. I cannot reproach you on the account, nor complain of it ; but allow, that I am not happy. There is perhaps but one woman in Athens who really has love for her husband, and it is for this very woman that I am distracted.'---'Indeed, you are a great simpleton for the disciple of a sage,' said Rhodope with a smile. He replied very gravely ; she answered again jeeringly. He took her by the hand, she grew angry ; he kissed her hand, she would have withdrawn ; he detained her, she blushed ; and the heads of both the philosophers were turned topsy-turvy.

It is unnecessary to say how much Rhodope was vexed, and how she consoled herself. All this is supposed in a virtuous and captivated woman.

She trembled above all for the honour and peace of her husband. Alcibiades swore inviolable secrecy ; but the malice of the public rendered any indiscretion on his part absolutely needless. It was well known that he was not the sort of man to talk for ever about philosophy to an amiable woman. His assiduities created suspicions ; suspicions in the world always go as far as certainties. It was decided that Alcibiades had Rhodope. The report came to the ears of her husband : he was far from giving credit to it ; but his honour, and that of his wife, required that she should put herself above suspicion. He spoke to her of the necessity of putting away Alcibiades, with so much good-humour, reason, and confidence, that she had not the courage to reply. Nothing is more grievous to a soul naturally sensible and virtuous, than the receiving marks of esteem which it no longer deserves.

Rhodope

Rhodope from that moment resolved never more to see Alcibiades ; and the more weakness she perceived in herself towards him, the more firmness she displayed in her resolution of breaking with him. In vain did he endeavour to subdue her by his eloquence. ‘ I have suffered myself to be persuaded,’ said she to him, ‘ that the secret injuries we do a husband were nothing ; but the very appearances of them become real injuries from the moment they attack his honour, or distract his peace. I may be willing to believe that I am not obliged to love my husband ; but to render him happy, as far as in me lies, is an indispensable duty.’—‘ So then, Madam, you prefer his happiness to mine?’—‘ I prefer,’ said she to him, ‘ my engagements to my inclinations : this word, which has now escaped me, shall be my last weakness.’—‘ Alas ! I thought myself beloved,’ cried Alcibiades with displeasure. ‘ Farewell, madam ; I see plainly that I owed my happiness only to the caprice of a moment. See ! these are our virtuous women !’ continued he. ‘ When they take to us, it is an excess of love ; when they forsake us, it is an effor^t of virtue ; and, at the bottom, this love and this virtue are nothing more than a mere phantasy, which seizes them at one time, and leaves them at another.’ ‘ I have deserved this affront !’ said Rhodope, bursting into tears. ‘ A woman who has not maintained a proper respect for herself, is not to expect it from others. It is very just that our weaknesses should bring us into contempt.’

Alcibiades, after so many proofs, was thoroughly convinced, that there was no longer any dependence upon women ; but he had not confidence enough in himself to expose himself to new dangers ; and fully resolved as he was not to love again, he yet perceived in a confused manner the necessity of loving.

In this secret quietude, while he was walking one day on the sea-shore, he saw a woman advancing towards him, whose gait and beauty might have made him take her for a goddess, if he had not discovered her

her to be the courtezan Eigone. He would have shunned her, but she made up directly to him. ‘ Alcibiades,’ said she, ‘ philosophy will make a fool of you. Tell me, my dear boy, is it a time at your age, to bury one’s self alive in these chimerical and melancholy ideas? Take my advice, and be happy; we have always time enough to be wise.’---‘ I have no ambition to be wise,’ said he to her, ‘ but in order to be happy.’-----‘ A pretty road indeed to happiness! Do you think I wear myself out in the study of wisdom? Not I. And yet is there any of your honest women more content with her condition? This Socrates has spoiled you: it is a pity! but yet there is a cure for you, if you will take some lessons from me. I have had a design upon you for some time: I am young, handsome, and sensible; and I believe I may say, without vanity, of as much value as any long-bearded philosopher of them all. They teach mortification! horrible science! Come to my school, and I will teach you the art of enjoyment.’---‘ I have learned it but too well to my cost,’ replied Alcibiades: ‘ ostentation and pleasure have ruined me. I am no longer that opulent and magnificent person whom his follies rendered so famous; and I have not at present even a support but at the expence of my creditors.’---‘ Very well; and is it that which chagrins you? Be comforted; I have gold and jewels in abundance, and the follies of others shall serve to repair thine.’---‘ You flatter me greatly replied Alcibiades, ‘ by these obliging offers; but I shall not make an ill use of them.’-----‘ What do you mean by this delicacy? Does not love make all things common? Besides, who will imagine that you owe anything to me? You are not fool enough to boast of it, and I have too much pride to publish it myself.’---‘ You surprise me; for, to say the truth, you have the character of being avaricious.’---‘ Avaricious! Aye, to be sure, with those whom I do not love, in order to be lavish to the man that I love. My diamonds are very dear to me, but you are still dearer: if you want them,

them, say but the word ; to-morrow I will sacrifice them to you.'---' Your generosity,' replied Alcibiades, ' confounds and penetrates me : I would give you the pleasure of exercising it, if I were able at least to shew my gratitude like a young fellow ; but I ought not to dissemble with you, that the immoderate use of pleasures has not only ruined my fortune, but I have found out the secret of growing old before my time.'---' I believe so,' replied Erigone smiling ; ' you have known so many virtuous women ! But I am going to surprise you still more : a lively and delicate sentiment is all I expect from you ; and if your heart, too, is not ruined, you have yet enough to satisfy me.'---' You rally,' said Alcibiades. ' Not at all. If I took a Hercules for a lover, I should wish him to prove himself a Hercules ; but I would have Alcibiades love me only like Alcibiades, with all the delicacy of that tranquil pleasure whose source is in the heart ! If on the sensual side you intend me any surprise, so much the better ! I allow you every thing, and exact nothing.'---' Indeed,' said Alcibiades, ' I am as much charmed as astonished ; and but for the uneasiness and jealousy I should feel on account of my rivals---' ' Rivals ! you shall have none but unfortunate ones, I give you my word. Trust me, my friend, women do not change but either through coquetry or curiosity ; and with me, you know, both the one and the other are exhausted. If I were unacquainted with mankind, the promise I now make you might be a little rash ; but in sacrificing them to you, I know very well what I am doing. After all there is one certain way of making you easy : you have a farm at a good distance from Athens, where no impertinents will come to trouble us. Do you think yourself capable of supporting a *tête à tête* there with me ? We will set out whenever you will.'---' No,' said he to her, ' my engagements detain me for some time in town ; but if we should settle matters together, need we advertise ourselves ?'---' Just as you please : if you think proper to own me, I shall proclaim you ; if you

you chuse secrecy, I will be more discreet and reserved than a prude. As I am dependent on nobody, and love you merely for your own sake, I neither fear nor desire to attract the eyes of the public. Put no constraint on yourself; consult your heart; and if I am agreeable to you, my supper is ready for us. Let us go and call the gods of joy and pleasure to witness to our vows!' Alcibiades seized Erigone by the hand, and kissed it with transport. 'At last,' said he, 'I have found true love; and from this day my happiness commences.'

They arrive at the courtezan's. The most delicate and exquisite of every thing that taste could invent to gratify all the senses at once, seemed to have concurred in this supper to enchant Alcibiades. It was in such an apartment that Venus received Adonis, when the Loves poured out nectar, and the Graces served ambrosia. 'When I took,' said Erigone, 'the name of one of the mistresses of Bacchus, I did not flatter myself with possessing one day a mortal handsomer than the conqueror of India. What do I say? a mortal! It is Bacchus, Apollo, and the god of love himself, that I possess: and I am this moment the happy rival of Erigone, Calliope, and Psyche. I crown you then, my young god, with the vine-leaf, the laurel, and the myrtle. May I be able to bring before your eyes all the attractions adored by those immortals, whose charms are united in you!' Alcibiades, intoxicated with self-love and desire, displayed all those enchanting talents which might have seduced wisdom itself. He sung his triumph on the lyre; he compared his happiness to that of the gods; and he found himself happier than they, as he had before been found to be more amiable.

After supper he was conducted into a neighbouring apartment, but separated from that of Erigone. 'Repose yourself, my dear Alcibiades,' said she, leaving him: 'may love possess you in your dreams of nothing but me! Vouchsafe at least to make me believe so; and if any other object should present itself to your imagination, spare my delicacy, and by a complaisant falsehood repair

repair the involuntary wrong you have done me in your sleep.'---' Ah, what,' replied Alcibiades tenderly, ' will you reduce me to the pleasure of illusion?'---' You shall never have with me,' said she, ' any other laws than your desires.' At these words she withdrew into her own apartment, humming a tune. Alcibiades cried out in a transports of joy---' O modesty! O virtue! what then are ye, if in a heart where you reside not there is found pure and chaste love; love, such as it descended from the skies to animate man while yet innocent, and to embellish human nature!' In this excess of joy and admiration he gets up, and goes to surprise Erigone.

Erigone received him with a smile. Inspired with a sensibility tempered with delicacy, her heart seemed only to take fire from the desires of Alcibiades. Two months glided away in this delicious union, without the courtesan's ever belying for one moment the character she had assumed; but the fatal day now approached that was to dissipate so flattering an illusion.

The preparations for the Olympic Games engrossed the conversation of all the youth of Athens. Erigone spoke of these games, and of the glory of bearing away the prize in them, with so much warmth, that she made her lover form the design of entering into the course, and conceive a hope of triumphing. But he wanted to delight her by an agreeable surprise.

The day on which these games were to be celebrated, Alcibiades left her, in order to repair thither. ' If they should see us together,' said he, ' at these spectacles, they would not fail of drawing inferences; and we have agreed to avoid even suspicion. Let us repair to the circus, each on different sides. We will return here after the feast, and I expect you at supper.'

The people assemble, and seat themselves. Erigone presents herself, and attracts the eyes of all. The handsome women view her with envy, the ugly with indignation; the old men with regret, and the young with universal transport. However, the eyes of Erigone, wandering over the vast amphitheatre, looked

for

for nothing but Alcibiades. All on a sudden she saw appear before the barrier the couriers and the chariot of her lover. She durst not believe her eyes ; but, soon after, a young man, more beautiful than the god of love, and more gallant than Mars, vaults into the glittering car. ‘ It is Alcibiades ! It is he himself ! ’ The name passes from mouth to mouth ; she hears no longer any thing around her but these words : ‘ It is Alcibiades, the glory and ornament of the Athenian youth ! ’ Erigone turned pale with joy : he cast a look at her which seemed to be the prelude of victory. The chariots range themselves in a line, the barrier opens, the signal is given, the ground resounds in cadence under the feet of the horses, a cloud of dust enfolds them. Erigone no longer breathes : all her soul is in her eyes, and her eyes pursue the chariot of her lover through the clouds of dust. The chariots separate ; the swiftest get the start ; that of Alcibiades is of the number. Erigone trembling puts up vows to Castor, to Pollux, to Hercules, to Apollo. At last she perceives Alcibiades at the head, and having only one who kept pace with him. It was then that fear and hope held her soul suspended. The wheels of the two chariots seemed to turn on the same axle, and the horses guided by the same reins. Alcibiades redoubles his ardour, and the heart of Erigone begins to dilate ; his rival increases his speed, and the heart of Erigone shuts itself up again : every alternate revolution produces a sudden change in her. The two chariots arrive at the goal ; but Alcibiades’s antagonist has outstripped him by a single shoot forwards. Immediately a thousand cries made the air resound with the name of Pisicles of Samos. Alcibiades, confounded, retires in his chariot ; his head hung down, and the reins floating loosely, avoiding that side of the circus, where Erigone, overwhelmed with confusion, had hid her face beneath her veil. It appeared to her as if all eyes were fixed upon her, to reproach her for loving a man who had just been conquered. A general murmur, however, is heard round her ;

her ; she looks up to see the cause ; it is Pilicrates, who is bringing back his chariot on the side where she is placed. A new occasion of confusion and grief ! But what is her surprise, when the chariot stopping at her feet, she sees the conqueror alight, and present her with the Olympic crown ! ‘ I owe it to you, Madam,’ said he, ‘ and I come to pay you the homage of it.’ Let us conceive, if possible, all the emotions of the soul of Erigone at this speech ; but love was predominant. ‘ You owe me nothing,’ said she to Pilicrates, blushing ; ‘ my wishes, pardon my frankness, my wishes were not for you.’—‘ The desire of conquering before you,’ replied he, ‘ has not the less on that account acquired me this glory. If I have not been happy enough to interest you in the contention, let me be at least sufficiently so to interest you in the triumph.’ He then pressed her anew, with the most affecting air, to receive his offering : all the people invited her to it by redoubled shouts of applause. Self love at length prevailed over her love for Alcibiades : she received the fatal laurel, to yield, she said, to the acclamations and instances of the people ; but who could believe it ? She received it with a smiling air ; and Pilicrates remounted his chariot intoxicated with love and glory.

As soon as Alcibiades was recovered of his first dejection, ‘ You are very weak, and very vain,’ said he to himself, ‘ to afflict yourself to this immoderate degree ! and for what ? because there is found in the world one man more dexterous, or more happy, than thyself. But I see what it is that torments you : you would have been transported to have conquered in the presence of Erigone ; and you dread the thought of being loved less, after being vanquished. Do her more justice : Erigone is not like the ordinary run of women ; she will be pleased with you for the ardour you have shewn to conquer ; and as to your ill success, she will be the first to make you blush for your sensibility on so small a misfortune. Let me go and see her with confidence ; I have even cause to rejoice at this moment

of adversity, it is a new trial of her heart, and Love contrives me a triumph more pleasing than that of the course.' Full of these consoling ideas, he arrives at Eri-gone's, but finds the chariot of the conqueror at the door.

This was a clap of thunder to him. Shame, indignation, despair, seize his soul. Distracted and raging, his disordered steps turn, as it were of themselves, to the house of Socrates.

The good man, who had been present at the games, ran out to meet him. 'So!' said he, 'you come to console yourself with me, because you have been vanquished. I dare say, young man, that I should not have seen you, had you triumphed. I am not, however, the less thankful for the visit. I love to have people come to me in adversity. A soul intoxicated with its good fortune, vents itself wherever it can; the confidence of a soul in affliction is more flattering and affecting. Confess, however, that your horses did miracles. Why, you missed of the prize only by one spring. You may boast, therefore, that, next to Pisocrates of Samos, you have the best coursers in all Greece; and indeed it is a most glorious thing for a man to have excellent horses!' Alcibiades, confounded at his misfortune, did not even hear the raillery of Socrates. The philosopher guessing at the trouble of his heart by the alteration of his countenance---'What, then,' said he to him in a graver tone, 'does a trifle, a mere childish amusement, affect you thus? If you had lost an empire, I could scarce pardon your being in the state of humiliation and dejection wherein I now see you.'---'Ah! my dear master,' cried Alcibiades, coming to himself, 'how unhappy are we in having sensibility! We ought to have a soul of marble to live in the age we do.'---'I confess,' replied Socrates, 'that sensibility costs us dear sometimes; but it is so good a quality, that we cannot pay too dear for it. Let us know, however, what has befallen you.'

Alcibiades recounted to him his adventures with the prude, the young lady, the widow, the magistrate's wife,

wife, and the courtezan who at that very instant had just sacrificed him to another. ‘ What is it that you bemoan yourself for?’ said Socrates, after hearing his complaint; ‘ it appears to me, that each of them loved you after her manner with the greatest sincerity in the world. The prude, for example, loved pleasure; she found it in you; you deprive her of it, she dismisses you; and so with the rest. It was their own happiness, never doubt it, that they sought in their lover. The young lady saw in you a husband whom she could love with freedom and decency; the widow, a glorious triumph which did honour to her beauty; the magistrate’s wife, an amiable and discreet man, with whom, without either danger or noise, her philosophy and her virtue might take some relaxation; the courtezan, a man admired, applauded, and universally desired, whom she would have the secret pleasure of possessing alone, while all the beauties of Greece should vainly dispute with each other the glory of captivating him.’...‘ You confess, then,’ said Alcibiades, ‘ that not one of them loved me for *myself*?...‘ For *yourself*!’ cried the philosopher; ‘ ah, my dear child! who has put this ridiculous pretension into your head? None loves but for themselves. Friendship itself, purely sentimental as it is, founds its preferences only on personal interest; and if you demand that it should be disinterested, you may begin by renouncing mine. I am amazed,’ pursued he, ‘ to see how foolish self-love is, even in those who have the best understanding. I should be very glad to know, what is this SELF that you would have them love in you? Birth, fortune, glory, youth, talents, and beauty, are but accidents. Nothing of all this is your-SELF, and yet this is all that renders you amiable. The self, which unites all these charms, is no more than the canvas of the tapestry: it is the embroidery that gives it value. In loving all these endowments in you, they confound them with you. Do not, I advise you, run into imaginary distinctions; and receive, as it is given you, the result of this mixture;

ture : it is a coin of which the alloy forms the the con-sistence, but which loses it's value in the crucible. I am not sorry that your delicacy has detached you from the prude and the widow ; nor that the resolution of Rhodope, and the vanity of Erigone, has restored you to liberty : but I regret the loss of Glycerium, and advise you to return to her.'---' You jest !' said Alcibiades ; ' she is a mere child, who only wants to be married.'---' Very well, you shall marry her then.'---' Did I hear right ? Socrates advise me to marriage !'---' Why not ? If your wife be wise and reasonable, you will be a happy man ; if she be a wanton or a coquette, you will become a philosopher ; you cannot, therefore, do otherwise than gain by it.'

SOLIMAN II.

IT is pleasant to see grave historians racking their brains, in order to find out great causes for great events. Sylla's valet de chambre would perhaps have laughed heartily to hear the politicians reason on the abdication of his master ; but it is not of Sylla that I am now going to speak.

Soliman II. married his slave ; in contempt of the laws of the sultans. It is natural at first to paint to ourselves this slave as an accomplished beauty, with an elevated soul, an uncommon genius, and a profound skill in politics. No such thing : the fact was as follows.

Soliman grew splenetic in the midst of his glory : the various, but ready pleasures of the seraglio, were become insipid to him. ' I am weary,' said he one day, ' of receiving here the caresses of mere machines. These slaves move my pity. Their soft docility has nothing poignant, nothing flattering. It is to hearts nourished in the bosom of liberty, that it would be delightful to make slavery agreeable.'

The whimsies of a sultan are laws to his ministers. Large sums were instantly promised to such as should bring European slaves to the seraglio. In a short time there arrived three, who, like the three Graces, seemed

to have divided among themselves all the charms of beauty.

Features noble and modest, eyes tender and languishing, an ingenuous temper, and a sensible soul, distinguished the touching Elmira. The entrance of the seraglio, the idea of servitude, had chilled her with a mortal terror: Soliman found her in a swoon in the arms of his women. He approaches; he recalls her to life; he encourages her; she lifts towards him a pair of large blue eyes, bedewed with tears; he reaches forth his hand to her; he supports her himself; she follows him with a tottering step. 'The slaves retire; and as soon as he is alone with her -- "It is not with fear, beautiful Elmira," said he to her, "that I would inspire you. Forget that you have a master; see in me only a lover." -- 'The name of lover,' said she to him, 'is not less unknown to me than that of master: and both the one and the other make me tremble. They have told me (and I still shudder at the thought) that I am destined to your pleasures. Alas! what pleasure can it be to tyrannize over weakness and innocence! Believe me, I am not capable of the compliances of servitude; and the only pleasure possible for you to taste with me, is that of being grieved. Restore me to my parents, and my country; and in the respect you shew for my virtue, my youth, and my misfortunes, merit my gratitude, my esteem, and my regret.'

This discourse from a slave was new to Soliman; his great soul was moved by it. 'No,' said he, 'my dear child, I will owe nothing to violence. You charm me! I will make it my happiness to love and please you; and I will prefer the torment of never seeing you more to that of seeing you unhappy. However, before I restore you to liberty, give me leave to try, at least, whether it be not possible for me to dissipate that terror which the name of slave strikes into you. I ask only one month's trial; after which, if my love cannot move you, I will avenge myself no otherwise on your ingratitude, than by delivering you up to the inconstancy

and perfidy of mankind.'-----' Ah! my lord!' cried Elmira, with an emotion mixed with joy, ' how unjust are the prejudices of my country, and how little are your virtues known there ! Continue such as I now see you, and I no longer reckon this day unfortunate.'

Some moments after, she saw slaves enter, carrying baskets filled with stuffs and valuable trinkets. ' Chuse,' said the sultan to her; ' these are cloaths, not ornaments, that are here presented to you: nothing can adorn you.'---' Decide for me,' said Elmira to him, running her eyes over the baskets. ' Do not consult me,' replied the sultan; ' I hate without distinction, every thing that can rob me of your charms.' Elmira blushed, and the sultan perceived she preferred the colours most favourable to the character of her beauty. He conceiving a pleasing hope from that circumstance: for care to adorn one's self is almost a desire to please.

The month of trial passed away in timid gallantries on the part of the sultan, and on Elmira's side in complaisance and delicate attentions. Her confidence in him increased every day without her perceiving it. At first he was not permitted to see her, but after the business of the toilette, and on condition to depart when she prepared to undress again; in a short time he was admitted both to her toilette and dishabille. It was there that the plan of their amusements for that day and the next was formed. Whatever either proposed was exactly what the other was going to propose. Their disputes turn'd only on the stealing of thoughts. Elmira, in these disputes, perceived not some small slips which escaped her modesty. A pin misplaced, or a garter put on unthinkingly, &c. afforded the sultan pleasures which he was cautious not to testify. He knew (and it was much for a sultan to know) that it was impolitic to advertise modesty of the dangers to which it exposes itself; that it is never fiercer than when alarmed; and that, in order to subdue it, one should render them familiar. Nevertheless, the more he discovered of Elmira's charms, the more he perceived his

his fears increase, on account of the approach of the day that might deprive him of them.

The fatal period arrives. Soliman causes chests to be prepared, filled with stuffs, precious stones, and perfumes. He repairs to Elmira, followed by these presents. ‘ It is to-morrow,’ said he, ‘ that I have promised to restore you to liberty, if you still regret the want of it. I now come to acquit myself of my promise, and to bid adieu to you for ever.’---‘ What?’ said Elmira trembling, ‘ is it to morrow? I had forgot it.’---‘ It is to-morrow,’ resumed the sultan, ‘ that, delivered up to my despair, I am to become the most unhappy of men.’---‘ You are very cruel, then, to yourself, to put me in mind of it!’---‘ Alas! it depends only on you, Elmira, that I should forget it for ever.’---‘ I confess,’ said she to him, ‘ that your sorrow touches me; that your proceedings have interested me in your happiness; and if, to shew my gratitude, it were necessary only to prolong the time of my slavery---’
‘ No, Madam, I am but too much accustomed to the happiness of possessing you. I perceive that the more I shall know of you, the more terrible it would be to me to lose you: this sacrifice will cost me my life; but I shall only render it the more grievous by deferring it. May your country prove worthy of it! May the people whom you are going to please, deserve you better than I do! I ask but one favour of you, which is, that you would be pleased cordially to accept these presents, as the feeble pledges of a love the most pure and tender, that yourself, yes, that yourself, are capable of inspiring.’---
‘ No,’ said she to him, with a voice almost smothered, ‘ I will not accept of your presents. I go: you will have it so! But I shall carry away from you nothing but your image.’ Soliman lifting up his eyes to Elmira, met her’s bedewed with tears. ‘ Adieu, then, Elmira!’---
‘ Adieu, Soliman!’ They bid each other so many and such tender adieus, that they concluded by swearing not to separate for life. The avenues of pleasure through which he had passed so rapidly with his slaves from

from Asia, appeared to him so delicious with Elmira, that he found an inexpressible charm in going through them step by step: but arrived at the happiness itself, his pleasures had from that time the same def. &c. as before; they became too easy of access, and in a short time after too languid. Their days so well filled up till then, began to hang heavy. In one of these moments, when complaisance alone retained Soliman with Elmira----‘Would it be agreeable to you,’ said he, ‘to hear a slave from your own country, whose voice has been greatly commended to me?’ Elmira, at the proposal, plainly perceived that she was lost: but to put any constraint on a lover who begins to grow tired, is to tire him still more. ‘I am for any thing,’ said she, ‘that you please;’ and the slave was ordered to enter.

Delia (for that was the singer’s name) had the figure of a goddess. Her hair exceeded the ebony in blackness, and her skin the whiteness of ivory. Two eye-brows, boldly arched, crowned her sparkling eyes. As soon as she began tuning, her lips, which were of the finest vermillion, displayed two rows of pearl set in coral. At first she sung the victories of Soliman, and the hero felt his soul elevated at the remembrance of his triumphs. His pride hitherto, more than his taste, applauded the accents of that thrilling voice, which filled the whole saloon with its harmony and strength.

Delia changed her manner, to sing the charms of pleasure. She then took the theorbo; an instrument favourable to the display of a rounded arm, and to the movements of a delicate and light hand. Her voice, more flexible and tender, now resounded none but the most touching sounds. Her modulations, connected by imperceptible gradations, expressed the delirium of a soul intoxicated with pleasure, or exhausted with sentiment. Her sounds, sometimes expiring on her lips, sometimes swelled and sunk with rapidity, expressed by turns the sighs of modesty and the vehemence of desire; while

while her eyes still more than her voice animated these lively descriptions.

Soliman, quite transported, devoured her both with his ears and eyes. ‘ No,’ said he, ‘ never before did so beautiful a mouth utter such pleasing sounds. With what delight must she, who sings so feelingly of pleasure, inspire and relish it ! How charming to draw that harmonious breath, and to catch again in their passage those sounds animated by love ! ’ The sultan, lost in these reflections, perceived not that all the while he kept beating time on the knee of the trembling Elmira. Her heart oppressed with jealousy, she was scarce able to breathe. ‘ How happy is Delia,’ said she, in a low voice, to Soliman, ‘ to have so tunable a voice ! Alas ! it ought to be the organ of my heart ! every thing that she expresses, you have taught me to feel.’ So said Elmira, but Soliman did not listen to her.

Delia changed her tone a second time to inconstancy. All that the changeful variety of nature contains, either interesting or amiable, was recapitulated in her song. It seemed like the fluttering of the butterfly over roses, or like the zephyrs losing themselves among the flowers. ‘ Listen to the turtle,’ laid Delia, ‘ she is faithful but melancholy. See the inconstant sparrow : pleasure moves his wings ; his warbling voice is exerted merely to return thanks to love. Water freezes only in stagnation ; a heart never languishes but in constancy. There is but one mortal on earth, whom it is possible to love always. Let him change, let him enjoy the advantage of making a thousand hearts happy ; all prevent his wishes, or pursue him. They adore him in their own arms ; they love him even in the arms of another. Let him give himself up to our desires, or withdraw himself from them, still he will find love wherever he goes, wherever he goes will leave the print of love on his footsteps.

Elmira was no longer able to dissemble her displeasure and grief. She gets up and retires : the sultan does not recall her ; and while she is overwhelming herself with

with tears, repeating a thousand times—“ Ah, the ungrateful! ah, the perfidious man!” Soliman charmed with his divine songstress, prepares to realize with her some of those pictures which she had drawn so much to the life. The next morning the unhappy Elmira writes a billet filled with reproach and tenderness, in which she puts him in mind of the promise he had made her. ‘ That is true,’ said the sultan; ‘ let us send her back to her country, laden with marks of my favour. This poor girl loves me dearly, and I am to blame on her account.’

The first moments of his love for Delia were no more than an intoxication; but as soon as he had time for reflection, he perceived that she was more petulant than sensible, more greedy of pleasure than flattered in administering it; in a word, fitter than himself to have a seraglio at command. To feed his illusion, he sometimes invited Delia, that he might hear that voice which had enchanted him; but that voice was no longer the same. The impression made by it became every day weaker and weaker by habitude; and it was now no more than a slight emotion, when an unforeseen circumstance dissipated it for ever.

The chief officer of the seraglio came to inform the sultan, that it was impossible to manage the untractable vivacity of one of the European slaves; that she made a jest of his prohibitions and menaces; and that she answered him only by cutting tailleries and immoderate bursts of laughter. Soliman, who was too great a prince to make a state affair of what merely regarded the regulation of his pleasures, entertained a curiosity of seeing this young madcap. He repaired to her, followed by the eunuch. As soon as she saw Soliman, ‘ Heaven be praised!’ said she, ‘ here comes a human figure! You are without doubt the sublime sultan, whose slave I have the honour to be? Do me the favour to drive away this old knave, who shocks my very sight.’ The sultan had a great deal of difficulty to refrain from laughing at this beginning. ‘ Roxalana,’ said

said he to her, for so she was called, ‘ shew some respect, if you please, to the minister of my pleasures : you are yet a stranger to the manners of the teraglio ; till they can instruct you in them, contain yourself and obey.’— ‘ A fine compliment !’ said Roxalana. ‘ Obey ! Is that your Turkish gallantry ? Sure you must be mightily beloved, if it is in this strain you begin your addresses to the ladies ! *Respect the minister of my pleasures !* You have your pleasures, then ? and, good Heaven ! what pleasures, if they resemble their minister ! an old amphibious monster, who keeps us here, penned in, like sheep in a fold, and who prowls round with his frightful eyes always ready to devour us ! See here the confidante of your pleasures, and the guardian of our prudence ! Give him his due, if you pay him to make yourself hated, he does not cheat you of any of his wages, We cannot take a step but he growls. He forbids us even to walk, and to receive or pay visits. In a short time, I suppose, he will weigh out the air to us, and give us light by the yard. If you had seen him rave last night, because he found me in these solitary gardens ! Did you order him to forbid our going into them ? Are you afraid that it should rain men ? and if there should fall a few from the clouds, what a misfortune ! Heaven owes us this miracle.’

While Roxalana spoke thus, the sultan examined, with surprize, the fire of her looks, and the play of her countenance. ‘ By Mahom t !’ said he to himself, ‘ here is the prettiest-looking wimp in all Asia. Such faces as these are made only in Europe. Roxalana had nothing fine, nothing regular in her features ; but, taken all together, they had that smart singularity which touches more than beauty. A speaking look, a mouth fresh and rosy, an arch smile, a nose somewhat turned up, a neat and well-made shape ; all these circumstances gave her giddiness a charm which disconcerted the gravity of Soliman. But the great, in his situation have the resource of silence ; and Soliman, not knowing how to

answer

answer her; fairly walked off, concealing his embarrassment under an air of majesty.

The eunuch asked him what orders he would be pleased to give with respect to this saucy slave. ‘ She is a mere child,’ replied the sultan; ‘ you must pass over some things in her.’

The air, the tone, the figure, the disposition of Roxalana, had excited in the soul of Soliman an anxiety and emotion which sleep was not able to dispel. As soon as he awoke he ordered the chief of the eunuchs to come to him. ‘ You seem to me,’ said he, ‘ to be but little in Roxalana’s good graces ; in order to make your peace, go and tell her I will come and drink tea with her.’ On the arrival of the officer, Roxalana’s women hastened to wake her. ‘ What does the ape want with me !’ cried she, rubbing her eyes. ‘ I come,’ replied the eunuch, ‘ from the emperor, to kiss the dust of your feet, and to inform you that he will come and drink tea with the delight of his soul.’—‘ Get away with your strange speeches ! My feet have no dust, and I do not drink tea so early.’

The eunuch retired without replying, and gave an account of his embassy. ‘ She is in the right,’ said the sultan; ‘ why did you wake her ? You do every thing wrong.’ As soon as it was broad day with Roxalana he went thither. ‘ You are angry with me ?’ said he; ‘ they have disturbed your sleep, and I am the innocent cause of it. Come, let us make peace ; imitate me : you see that I forget all that you said to me yesterday.’—‘ You forget it ! so much the worse : I said some good things to you. My frankness displeases you, I see plainly : but you will soon grow accustomed to it. And are you not too happy to find a friend in a slave ? Yes, a friend, who interests herself in your welfare ; and who would teach you to love. Why have not you made a voyage to my country ? It is there that they know love ; it is there that it is lively and tender ; and why ? Because it is free. Sentiment is involuntary, and does not come by force. The yoke of

marriage amongst us is much lighter than that of slavery ; and yet a husband that is beloved is a prodigy. Every thing under the name of duty saddens the soul, blasts the imagination, cools desire, and takes off that edge of self-love which gives all the relish and seasoning to affection. Now, if it be so difficult to love a husband, how much harder is it to love a master, especially if he has not the address to conceal the fetters he puts upon us ! --- ' And I,' replied the sultan, ' I will forget nothing to soften your servitude ; but you ought in your tufn---' I *ought* ! nothing but what one *ought* ! Leave off, I pr'ythee, now, these humiliating phrases. They come with a very ill grace from the mouth of a man of gallantry, who has the honour of talking to a pretty woman.' --- ' But, Roxalana, do you forget who I am, and who you are ? --- ' *Who you are, and who I am !* You are powerful, I am pretty ; and so we are even.' --- ' May be so,' replied the sultan haughtily, ' in your country ; but here, Roxalana, I am master, and you a slave.' --- ' Yes, I know you have purchased me ; but the robber who sold me could transfer to you only those rights over me which he had himself, the rights of rapine and violence ; in one word, the rights of a robber ; and you are too honest a man to think of abusing them. After all, you are my master, because my life is in your hands ; but I am no longer your slave, if I know how to despise life ; and truly the life one leads here is not worth the fear of losing it.' --- ' What a frightful notion ! ' cried the sultan : ' do you take me for a barbarian ? No, my dear Roxalana, I would make use of my power only to render this life delightful to yourself and me.' --- ' Upon my word,' said Roxalana, ' the prospect is not very promising. These guards, for instance, so black, so disgusting, so ugly, are they the smiles and sports which here accompany love ? ' --- ' These guards are not set upon you alone. I have five hundred women, whom our manners and laws oblige me to keep watched.' --- ' And why five hundred women ? ' said she to him, with

an air of confidence. ‘ It is a kind of state which the dignity of sultan imposes upon me.’—‘ But what do you do with them, pray ? for you lend them to nobody.’—‘ Inconstancy,’ replied the sultan, ‘ has introduced this custom. A heart void of love stands in need of variety. Lovers only are constant, and I never was a lover till I saw you. Let not the number of these women give you the shadow of uneasiness ; they shall serve only to grace your triumph : you shall see them all eager to please you, and you shall see me attentive to no one but yourself.’

‘ Indeed,’ said Roxalana, with an air of compassion, ‘ you deserve better luck. It is pity you are not a plain private gentleman in my country ; I should then be weak enough to entertain some sort of kindness for you : for, at the bottom, it is not yourself that I hate, it is that which surrounds you. You are much better than ordinary for a Turk : you have even something of the Frenchman about you ; and, without flattery, I have loved some who were not so deserving as yourself.’—‘ You have loved !’ cried Soliman, with horror.—‘ Oh, not at all ! I took care of that. But do you expect one to have kept one’s virtue all one’s life-time, in order to surrender it to you ? Indeed, these Turks are pleasant people !’—‘ And you have not been virtuous ? O Heavens, what do I hear ! I am betrayed ! I am lost ! Destruction seize the traitors who meant to impose upon me !’—‘ Forgive them,’ said Roxalana ; ‘ the poor creatures are not to blame. The most knowing are often deceived. And then, the misfortune is not very great. Why do not you restore me to my liberty if you think me unworthy of the honours of slavery ?’—‘ Yes, yes, I will restore you to that liberty, of which you have made so good use.’ At these words the sultan retired in a rage, saying to himself, ‘ I plainly foresaw that this little turned-up nose had made a slip.’

It is impossible to describe the confusion into which this imprudent avowal of Roxalana’s had thrown him. Sometimes he had a mind to have sent her away, sometimes

times that they should shut her up; next that they should bring her to him, and then again, that she should have been sent away. The great Soliman no longer knows what he says. ‘ My lord,’ remonstrated the eunuch, ‘ can you fall into despair for a triflē? One girl more or less; is there any thing so uncommon in her? Besides, who knows whether the confession she has made be not an artifice to get herself sent back to her own country?’---‘ What say you? How! can it be possible? It is the very thing! He opens my eyes. Women are not used to make such confessions. It is a trick! a stratagem! Ah, the perfidious hussy! Let me dissemble in my turn: I will drive her to the last extremity. Hark ye! go and tell her that I invite her to sup with me this evening. But, no; order the songstress to come here: it is better to send her.’

Delia was charged to employ all her art to engage the confidence of Roxalana. As soon as the latter had heard all that she had got to say, ‘ What!’ said she, ‘ young and handsome as you are, does he charge you with his messages, and have you the weakness to obey him? Get you gone; you are not worthy to be my country-woman. Ah! I see plainly that they spoil him, and that I alone must take upon me to teach this Turk how to live. I will send him word that I keep you to sup with me; I must have him make some atonement for his impertinence.’---‘ But, Madam, he will take it ill.’---‘ He! I should be glad to see him take any thing ill of me.’---‘ But he seemed desirous of seeing you alone.’---‘ Alone, ah! it is not come to that yet; and I shall make him go over a good deal of ground, before we have any thing particular to say to each other.’

The sultan was as much surprised as piqued to learn that they should have a third person. However, he repaired early to Roxalana’s. As soon as she saw him coming, she ran to meet him with as easy an air as if they had been upon the best footing in the world together. ‘ There,’ said she, ‘ is a handsome man come to sup with us! Do you like him, Madam? Confess, So-

Soliman, that I am a good friend, Come, draw near, salute the Lady. There! very well. Now, thank me. Softly; I do not like to have people dwell too long on their acknowledgements. Wonderful! I assure you he surprises me. He has had but two lessons, and see how he is improved! I do not despair of making him one day or other, an absolute Frenchman.'

Do but imagine the astonishment of a sultan; a sultan! the conqueror of Asia! to see himself treated like a school-boy by a slave of eighteen. During supper, her gaiety and extravagance were inconceivable. The sultan was beside himself with transport. He questioned her concerning the manners of Europe. One picture followed another. Our prejudices, our follies, our humours, were all laid hold of, all represented. Soliman thought himself in Paris. 'The witty rogue!' cried he; 'witty rogue!' From Europe she fell upon Asia. This was much worse: the haughtiness of the men, the weakness of the women, the dulness of their society, the filthy gravity of their amours, nothing escaped her, though she had seen nothing but cursorily. The seraglio had its tuhn; and Roxalana began by felicitating the sultan on having been the first to imagine that he could ensure the virtue of the women by the absolute impotence of the blacks.

She was preparing to enlarge upon the honour that this circumstance of his reign would do him in history; but he begged her to spare him. 'Well,' said she, 'I perceive that I take up those moments which Delia could fill up much better. Throw yourself at her feet, to obtain from her one of those airs which they say she sings with so much taste and spirit.' Delia did not suffer herself to be entreated. Roxalana appeared charmed: she asked Soliman, in a low voice, for a handkerchief; he gave her one, without the least suspicion of her design. 'Madam,' said she to Delia, presenting it to her, 'I am desired by the sultan to give you the handkerchief; you have well deserved it.'---'Oh, to be sure!'

sure! said Soliman, transported with anger; and presenting his hand to the songstress, retired along with her.

As soon as they were alone, ‘I confess,’ said he to her, ‘that this giddy girl confounds me. You see the style in which she treats me. I have not the courage to be angry with her. In short I am mad, and I do not know what method to take to bring her to reason.’—‘My lord,’ said Delia, ‘I believe I have discovered her temper. Authority can do nothing. You have nothing for it but extreme coldness or extreme gallantry. Coldness may pique her; but I am afraid we are too far gone for that. She knows that you love her. She will enjoy the pain that this will cost you; and you will come too sooner than she. This method, besides, is disagreeable and painful; and if one moment’s weakness should escape you, you will have all to begin again.’—‘Well then,’ said the sultan, ‘let us try gallantry.’

From that time there was in the seraglio every day a new festival, of which Roxalana was the object; but she received all this as an homage due to her, without concern or pleasure, but with a cool complaisance. The sultan sometimes asked her, ‘How did you like those sports, those concerts, those spectacles?’—‘Well enough,’ said she, but there was something wanting. ‘And what?’—‘Men and liberty.’

Soliman was in despair; he had recourse to Delia. ‘Upon my word,’ said the songstress, ‘I know nothing else that can touch her? at least, unless glory have a share in it. You receive to-morrow the ambassadors of your allies; cannot I bring her to see this ceremony behind a curtain, which may conceal us from the eyes of your court?’—‘And do you think,’ said the sultan, ‘that this would make any impression on her?’—‘I hope so,’ said Delia, ‘the women of her country love glory.’—‘You charm me!’ cried Soliman. ‘Yes, my dear Delia, I shall owe my happiness to you.’

At his return from this ceremony, which he took care to render as pompous as possible, he repaired to Roxalana. ‘Get you gone,’ said she to him, ‘out of my sight, and never see me more.’ The sultan remained motionless and dumb with astonishment. ‘Is this, then,’ pursued she, ‘your art of love? Glory and grandeur, the only good things worthy to touch the soul, are reserved for you alone; shame and oblivion, the most insupportable of all evils, are my portion; and you would have me love you! I hate you worse than death!’ The sultan would fain have turned this reproach into raillery. ‘Nay, but I am serious,’ resumed she; ‘if my lover had but a hut, I would share his hut with him, and be content. He has a throne; I will share his throne, or he is no lover of mine. If you think me unworthy to reign over the Turks, send me back to my own country, where all the handsome women are sovereigns, and much more absolute than I should be here; for they reign over hearts.’—‘The sovereignty of mine then is not sufficient for you?’ said Soliman, with the most tender air in the world. ‘No, I desire no heart which has pleasures that I have not. Talk to me no more of your feasts, all mere pastimes for children! I must have embassies.’—‘But Roxalana, you are either mad or you dream!’—‘And what do you find, then, so extravagant, in desiring to reign with you? Am I formed to disgrace a throne? and do you think that I should have displayed less greatness and dignity than yourself in assuring our subjects and allies of our protection?’—‘I think,’ said the sultan, ‘that you would do every thing with grace; but it is not in my power to satisfy your ambition, and I beseech you to think no more of it.’—‘Think no more of it; Oh! I promise you I shall think of nothing else: and I will from henceforward dream of nothing but a sceptre, a crown, an embassy.’ She kept her word. The next morning she had already contrived the design of her diadem, and had already settled every thing, except the colour of a ribband which was to tie it. She ordered

dered rich stuffs to be brought her for her habits of ceremony ; and as soon as the sultan appeared, she asked his opinion on the choice. He exerted all his endeavours to divert her from this idea ; but contradiction plunged her into the deepest melancholy ; and to draw her out of it again, he was obliged to flatter her illusion. Then she displayed the most brilliant gaiety. He seized these moments to talk to her of love ; but, without listening, she talked to him of politics. All her answers to the harangues of the deputies, on her accession to the crown, were already prepared. She had even formed projects of regulations for the territories of the grand signior. She would make them plant vines and build opera-houses ; suppress the eunuchs, because they were good for nothing ; shut up the jealous, because they disturbed society ; and banish all self-interested persons, because sooner or later they become rogues. The sultan amused himself for some time with these follies ; nevertheless, he still burned with the most violent love, without any hope of being happy. On the least suspicion of violence she became furious, and was ready to kill herself. On the other hand Soliman found not the ambition of Roxalana so very foolish : ' For, in short,' said he, ' is it not cruel to be alone deprived of the happiness of associating to my fortune a woman whom I esteem and love ? All my subjects may have a lawful wife ; an absurd law forbids marriage to me alone.' Thus spoke love, but policy put him to silence. He took the resolution of confiding to Roxalana the reasons which restrained him. ' I would make it,' said he, ' my happiness to leave nothing wanting to yours : but our manners----' ' Idle stories ! ----' Our lawg---' ' Old songs ! ----' The priests'---' What care they ! ---' ' The people and the soldiery'---' What is it to them ? Will they be more wretched when you shall have me for your consort ? You have very little love, if you have so little courage ! ' She prevailed so far, that Soliman was ashamed of being so fearful. He orders the mufti, the vizier, the camaican, the aga of the sea, and

and the aga of the janissaries, to come to him ; and he says to them, ‘ I have carried, as far as I was able, the glory of the crescent ; I have established the power and peace of my empire ; and I desire nothing, by way of recompence for my labours, but to enjoy, with the good-will of my subjects, a blessing which they all enjoy. I know not what law, but it is one that is not derived down to us from the prophet, forbids the sultans the sweets of the marriage-bed : thence I perceive myself reduced to the condition of slaves, whom I despise ; and I have resolved to marry a woman whom I adore. Prepare my people, then, for this marriage.

‘ approve of it, I receive their approbation as a mark of their gratitude ; but if they dare to murmur at it, tell them that I will have it so.’ The assembly received the sultan’s orders with a respectful silence, and the people followed their example.

Soliman transported with joy and love, went to fetch Roxalana, in order to lead her to the mosque ; and said to himself in a low voice, as he was conducting her thither, ‘ Is it possible that a little turned-up nose should overturn the laws of an empire ?’

The Scruple; or, Love dissatisfied with itself.

HEAVEN be praised,’ said Belisa, on going out of mourning for her husband, ‘ I have now fulfilled a grievous and painful piece of duty ! It was time it should be over. To see one’s self delivered up at the age of sixteen to a man whom we know nothing of ; to pass the best days of one’s life in dulness, dissimulation, and servitude ; to be the slave and victim of a love we inspire, but of which we cannot partake ; what a trial for virtue ! I have undergone it, and am now discharged. I have nothing to reproach myself with ; for though I did not love my husband, I pretended to love him, and that is much more heroic. I was faithful to him, notwithstanding his jealousy ; in short, I have mourned for him. This, I think, is carrying goodness of heart as far as it can go. At length restored to myself, I depend

depend on nothing but my own will, and it is only from to-day that I begin to live. Ah! how my heart would take fire, if any one should succeed so far as to please me! But let me consider well before I engage this heart of mine; and let me not, if possible, run the risk either of ceasing to love, or of ceasing to be loved. --- Cease to be loved! That, I believe, is a difficult matter,' resumed she, consulting at the same time her looking-glass; ' but to cease to love is still worse. How could one for any considerable time feign a passion one did not feel? I should never be able to do it. To leave a man after we have taken to him, is a piece of effrontery beyond me; and then complaints, despair, the noise of a rupture, all that is frightful! Let me love, since Heaven has given me a sensible heart; but let me love my whole life long, and not flatter myself with those transient likings, those caprices, which are so often taken for love. I have time to chuse and try myself; the only thing to be done to avoid all surprise is to form a distinct and exact notion of love. I have read that love is a passion, which of two souls makes but one; which pierces them at the same time, and fills them one with the other; which detaches them from every thing, supplies the want of every thing, and makes their mutual happiness their only care and desire. Such, without doubt, is love; and according to this idea of it, it will be very easy for me to distinguish in myself, and in others, the illusion from the reality.'

Her first experiment was made on a young magistrate, with whom the disposition of her late husband's effects gave her some connection. The president de S----, with an agreeable figure, a cultivated understanding, a sweet and sensible temper, was simple in his dress, easy in his manner, and modest in his conversation. He valued himself neither on being a connoisseur in equipages nor fineries. He talked not of his horses to the women, nor of his intrigues to the men. He had all the talents becoming his place without ostentation, and

and all the agreeable qualities of a man of the world without being a coxcomb. He was the same at court and in company; not that he passed decrees at an entertainment, or rallied when he heard causes; but as he had not the least affectation, he was always without disguise.

Belisa was touched with such uncommon merit, 'He had gained her confidence; he obtained her friendship, and under that name the heart goes a great way. The affairs of Belisa's husband being settled, ' May I be permitted,' said the president one day to the widow, ' to ask you one question in confidence? Do you propose to remain free, or shall the sacrifice of your liberty make one man more happy?'---' No, Sir,' said she, ' I have too much delicacy to make it any man's duty to live only for me.'---' That duty would be a very pleasing one,' replied the gallant magistrate; ' and I greatly fear, that without your consent more than one lover will impose it upon himself.'---' So much the better,' said Belisa; ' let them love me without being obliged to it: it is the most pleasing of all homages.'---' Yet, Madam, I cannot suspect you of being a coquette.'---' Oh! you would do me a great injustice if you did; for I abominate coquetry.'---' But to desire to be loved without loving again!'---' And who, Sir, has told you that I shall not love? Such resolutions are not taken at my age. I would neither constrain, nor be constrained; that is all.'---' Very well: you desire then, that the engagement should cease with inclination?'---' I desire that both the one and the other should be eternal, and for that reason I would avoid even the shadow of constraint. I feel myself capable of loving all my life long in liberty; but, to tell you the truth, I would not promise to love two days in slavery.'

The president saw plainly that he must humour her delicacy, and content himself with being on the footing of a friend. He had the modesty to bring himself to that; and from thenceforward every little tenderness of love was practised in order to touch her. He succeeded,

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I shall not mention the degrees by which Belisa's sensibility was every day more and more affected ; let it suffice, that she was now come to that pass, when prudence, in equipoise with love, waits only one slight effort to turn the scale. They were at this point, and were *tête à tête*. The president's eyes, enflamed with love, devoured the charms of Belisa ; he pressed her hand tenderly. Belisa, trembling, hardly breathed. The president solicited her with the impassioned eloquence of desire. ‘ Ah ! president,’ said she to him at last, ‘ could you be capable of deceiving me ? ’ At these words the last sigh of modesty seemed to have escaped her lips. ‘ No, Madam,’ said he, ‘ it is my heart, it is Love himself who has just spoken by my mouth, and may I die at your feet, if---’ As he fell at Belisa’s feet, his knee came upon one of the paws of Shock, the young widow’s favourite lap-dog. Shock set up an howl. ‘ Lord, Sir, how awkward you are ! ’ cried Belisa with anger. The president coloured, and was disconcerted. He took Shock to his bosom, kissed the injured paw, asked his pardon a thousand times, and entreated him to solicit his forgiveness. Shock recovered of his pain, returned the president’s caresses. ‘ You see, Madam, he has good nature ; he forgives me ; It is a fine example for you.’ Belisa made no reply. She was fallen into a profound reverie, and a cold gravity. He wanted at first to interpret her gravity as a little pouting, and threw himself again at Belisa’s feet in order to appease her. ‘ Pray, Sir, get up,’ said she to him ; ‘ these freedoms displease me, and I do not know that I have given you any room for them.’

Imagine the president’s astonishment. He was confounded for two whole minutes, without being able to bring out a word, ‘ What, Madam,’ said he to her at last, ‘ can it be possible that so trivial an accident has drawn your anger upon me?’---‘ Not at all, Sir ; but I may, without anger, take it ill that any one should throw himself at my feet : it is a situation that suits only happy lovers, and I esteem you too much to suspect

pect your having dared to form any such pretensions.' 'I do not see Madam,' replied the president with emotion, 'why a hope founded on love should render me less worthy of esteem: but may I presume to ask you, since love is a crime in your eyes, what is the nature of the sentiment you have expressed towards me?'---'Friendship, Sir, friendship; and I desire you very seriously to keep to that.'---'I ask your pardon, Madam: I should have sworn that it had been somewhat else; I see plainly that I was mistaken.'---'That may be, Sir; many others are mistaken as well as yourself.' The president could no longer sustain the shock of so strange an instance of caprice. He went away in despair, and was not recalled.

As soon as Belisa found herself alone, 'Was not I going to be guilty of a fine piece of folly?' said she with indignation. 'I have seen the moment when my weakness was going to yield to a man whom I did not love. They may well say that we know nothing less than ourselves, I could have sworn that I adored him; that there was nothing which I was not disposed to sacrifice to him: no such thing; he happens, without intending it, to hurt my little dog, and this violent love immediately gives place to anger. A dog touches me more than he, and without a moment's hesitation I take the part of this little animal against the man in the world whom I thought I loved best. A very lively passion indeed, mighty solid, and tender! See how we take ideas for sentiments! The brain is heated, and we fancy the heart inflamed; we proceed to all manner of follies; the illusion ceases, and disgust succeeds; we must tire ourselves with constancy without love, or be inconstant with indecency. O, my dear Sbock, what, do I not owe you! It is you that have undeceived me. But for you, I should perhaps have been at this moment overwhelmed with confusion, and torn with remorse.'

Whether Belisa did or did not love the president, (for questions of this nature turn merely on the equivocation

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tion of terms) it is certain, that on the strength of saying to herself that she did not love him, she succeeded so far as to convince herself of it; and a young officer soon confirmed her in her opinion.

Lindor, from being one of the pages had just obtained a company of horse. Freshness of youth, impatience of desire, giddiness, and levity, which are graces at sixteen, and follies at thirty, rendered agreeable in the eyes of Belisa this young man of quality, who had the honour of belonging to her husband's family. Lindor was extremely fond of himself, and not without reason; he knew that he was well made, and of a charming figure. He said so sometimes; but he laughed so heartily after he had said it, he discovered in laughing so fresh a mouth and such fine teeth, that these simplicities were pardoned at his age. He mingled besides such lofty and noble sentiments with the puerilities of self-love, that all this together was very engaging. He was desirous of having a handsome mistress, and a good war-horse; he would view himself in the glafs as he went through the Prussian exercises. He would beg Belisa to lend him the Sopha*, and asked her if she had read Polard's Polybius. He thought it long till spring, that he might have an elegant suit, in case of a peace, or make a campaign if it should be war. This mixture of frivolousness and heroism is perhaps the most seducing of any thing in the eyes of a woman. A confused presage that this pretty little creature, who trifles at the toilet, who caresses his dear self, who admires his own sweet person, will, perhaps, in two months time, throw himself in the face of a battery, upon a squadron of the enemy, or climb like a grenadier up a mined breach; this presage gives to the gentilities of a fine gentleman an air of the marvellous, which creates admiration and tenderness: but this foppery sits well on none but young gentlemen of the army. A piece of advice, by the way, to pretty fellows of every condition.

* The Title of a loose Novel.

Belisa was affected by the simple and airy graces of Lindor. He had conceived a passion for her from the first visit. A young page is in haste to be in love. ‘ My beautiful cousin,’ said he to her one day, for so he called her on account of their alliance, ‘ I ask of Heaven but two things; to make my first campaigns against the English, and with you.’—‘ You are a giddy creature,’ said she, ‘ and I advise you, to desire neither one nor the other: one will happen but too soon, and the other will never happen at all.’—‘ Never happen at all! That is very strange, my sweet cousin. But I expected this answer, so it does not discourage me. Come, I will lay you a wager that before my second campaign you will cease to be cruel. Now that I have nothing to plead for me but my age and figure you treat me like a child; but when you shall have heard it said, “ He was in such an action, his regiment charged on such an occasion, he distinguished himself, he took a post, he has run a thousand risks;” then your little heart will go pit-a-pat with fear and pleasure, and perhaps with love; who knows? If I were wounded for example! Oh, that is very moving! For my part, if I were a woman, I should wish that my lover had been wounded in the wars. I would kiss his scars, I should have infinite pleasure in counting them. My beautiful cousin, I shall shew you mine. You will never be able to hold it.’—‘ Go, you young fool, do your duty like a gallant man, and do not shock me with presages that make me tremble.’—‘ See, now, if I have not spoke truth? I make you tremble beforehand. Ah! if the idea alone affects you, what will the reality? Courage, my pretty cousin, you may trust yourself to me: will not you give me something in advance upon account of the laurels that I am going to gather?’

Such fooleries passed between them every day. Belisa, who pretended to laugh at them, was not the less sensibly touched; but that vivacity which made so great an impression upon her heart, prevented Lindor from perceiving it. He was neither knowing enough, nor

nor attentive enough, to observe the gradations of sentiment, and to draw his advantages from them. Not but he was as enterprising as politeness requires, but a look intimidated him, and the fear of displeasing influenced him as much as his impatience to be happy. Thus two months passed away in slight attempts, without any decisive success. However their mutual passion grew more and more animated ; and feeble as Belisa's resistance was, she was tired of it herself, when the signal for war gave the alarm to their loves.

At this terrible signal all engagements are suspended ; one flies away without waiting an answer to a most gallant billet, another fails in an assignation that would have crowned all his wishes : a total revolution in the whole empire of pleasures !

Lindor had scarce time to take leave of Belisa. She had now reproached herself a hundred times for her imaginary cruelties. ‘ This poor youth,’ said she, ‘ loves me with all his soul : nothing can be more natural or tender than the expression of his sentiments. His figure is a model for a paister or statuary. He is beautiful as the day ; giddy, indeed ; but who is not so at his age ? And he has an excellent heart. • He has nothing to do but to amuse himself ; he would find few cruel ; yet he sees only me, he breathes only for me, and I treat him with disdain. I wonder how he bears it. I confess, that if I were in his place, I should soon leave this rigid Belisa, to go and stupify herself with her virtue ; for, in short, though prudery is well enough sometimes, yet to be always acting the prudish part--’ As she was making these reflections, the news arrived that the negotiations for peace were broken off, and that the officers had orders to rejoin their corps without a moment's delay. At this news all her blood froze in her veins. ‘ He is going,’ cried she, her heart struck and penetrated--‘ He is going to fight ; going to die, perhaps ; and I shall never see him more ! ’ Lindor arrives in his uniform. ‘ I am come to bid you adieu, my sweet cousin : I am going ; going to face

the enemy. ' Half of my wish is fulfilled ; and I hope that at my return you will fulfil the other half. I love you dearly, my sweet cousin ! Do you sometimes remember your little cousin ; he will return your faithful servant, he gives you his word. If he is slain indeed, he will not return ; but in that case his ring and watch shall be sent you. You see here this little dog in enamel. In it you will retrace my image, my fidelity, my tenderness, and you will sometimes kiss it.' In pronouncing these last words, he smiled tenderly, and his eyes were bedewed with tears. Belisa, who was no longer able to restrain her own, said to him with the most sorrowful air in the world, ' You quit me very gaily, Lindor : you say you love me ; are these the adieus of a lover ? I thought it had been dreadful to banish one's self from what one loves. But it is not now the time to reproach you ; come, embrace me.' Lindor, transported, made use of this permission even to licentiousness, and Belisa was not offended. ' And when are you to depart ?' said she. ' Immediately.'---' Immediately ! what ! do not you sup with me !'---' Impossible.'---' I had a thousand things to say to you.'---' Say them quickly, then ; my horses wait.'---' You are very cruel to refuse me one evening !'---' Ah ! my pretty cousin, I would give you my life ; but my honour is at stake : my hours are numbered, I must be there to a minute. Think, if there should be an action and I not there, I should be undone : your little cousin would be unworthy of you. Suffer me to deserve you.'

Belisa embraced him anew, bathing him at the same time with her tears, ' Go,' said she ; ' I should be distracted if I drew the least reproach on you ; your honour is as dear to me as my own. Be wise, expose yourself only just as much as duty requires, and return such as I now see you. You do not give me time to say more ; but we will write to each other. Adieu.'---' Adieu, my sweet cousin.'---' Adieu, adieu, my dear boy.'

It

It is thus that among us gallantry is the soul of honour, as honour is the soul of our armies. Our ladies have no occasion to meet our warriors more than half-way, in order to make them fight; but the contempt with which they treat a poltroon, and the favour they shew to men of courage, render their loves intrepid.

Belisa passed the night in the most profound sorrow, and bathed her bed with her tears. The day following she wrote to Lindor: all that a tender and delicate soul could inspire of the most touching nature was expressed in her letter. O ye, who are so ill educated! who is it that teaches you to write so well? Does nature take pleasure to humble us by giving you your revenge?

Lindor, in his answer, which was full of fire and irregularity, expressed by turns the two passions of his soul, military ardour and love. Belisa's impatience disturbed her rest till she received this answer. Their correspondence was established, and continued without interruption for half the campaign; and the last they wrote was always the warmest, the last that was expected always the most desired. Lindor, to his misfortune, had a suspicious confident. ' You are bewitched,' said this bosom friend to him, ' with this woman's being so fond of you. Ah, if you did but know the bottom of all this! I know women. Will you make one proof of your mistress? Write her word that you have lost an eye; I will lay a wager she will advise you to take patience and forget her.' Lindor, quite certain of his triumph consented to make the trial: and as he knew not how to lie, his friend dictated the letter: Belisa was distracted: the image of Lindor presented itself to her imagination, but with one eye wanting. That large black patch made it impossible to know him. ' What pity!' said she sighing. ' His two eyes were so brilliant! Mine met them with so much pleasure! Love had painted himself there with so many charms! Yet he is only the more interesting to my heart on this account, and I ought to love him the

more. He must be disconsolate ; and dreads nothing so much as appearing less amiable to me. Let me write to him, to encourage, to comfort him, if it be possible.' This was the first time that Belisa was ever obliged to say to herself, *Let me write to him!* Her letter was cold, in spite of herself : she perceived it, tore it, and writ it over anew. The expressions were strong enough ; but the turn of them was forced, and the style laboured. That black patch, instead of a fine eye, eluded her imagination, and chilled her conceptions. ' Ah ! let me flatter myself no longer,' said she, tearing her letter a second time : ' this poor youth is no longer beloved ; an eye lost turns my soul topsy-turvy. I wanted to play the heroine ; and I am but a weak woman ; let me not affect sentiments above my character. Lindor does not deserve to be deceived : he reckons upon a generous and sensible soul ; but if I cannot love him, I ought at least to undeceive him ; his lying under a mistake will give me pain. "I am disconsolate,"' wrote she to him, "and am much more to be lamented than yourself : you have lost only a charm, but I am going to lose your esteem, as I have already lost my own. I thought myself worthy to love you, and to be beloved by you ; I am no longer so : my heart flattered itself with being superior to events ; a single accident has changed me. Console yourself, Sir ! you will always please any reasonable woman ; and after the humiliating confession I have now made you, you have no longer any occasion to regret me."'

Lindor was distracted on reading this billet. The *Sir* especially appeared to him an atrocious injury. 'Sir !' cried he. ' Ah ! the perfidious woman ! Her little cousin, Sir ! This, Sir, is for the man with one eye.' He went to find out his friend. ' I told you so,' said the confidant. Now is the time to take your revenge ; unless you had rather wait the end of the campaign, in order to give your heroine the pleasure of a surprize.'--' No, I will put her to confusion this very day,' replied the unfortunate Linder. He then wrote

wrote to her that he was quite transported that he had tried her ; that Sir had got his two eyes, but that those eyes should never view her more but as the most ungrateful of women. Belisa was confounded, and from that instant resolved to renounce the world, and bury herself in the country. ‘ Let me go and vegetate,’ said she, ‘ I am fit for nothing else.’

In her country neighbourhood was a kind of philosopher in the flower of his age, who, after having enjoyed every thing for six months of the year in town; was come for the other six months to enjoy himself in voluptuous solitude. He paid his compliments to Belisa. ‘ You have,’ said she to him, ‘ the reputation of wisdom ; what is your plan of life ?’—‘ Plan ! Madam ; I never had any,’ replied the Count de R. ‘ I do every thing that can amuse me, I seek after every thing that I love, and carefully avoid every thing that makes me dull, or displeases me.’—‘ Do you live alone ? or do you see company ?’—‘ I see our shepherds, sometimes, whom I teach morality ; I converse with husbandmen, who are better instructed than all our *literati* ; I give a ball to some of the prettiest young villagers in the world ; I make lotteries for them of laces and ribbands, and I marry off the most amorous.’—‘ What ! said Belisa with astonishment, ‘ do these folks know what love is ?’—‘ Better than we do, Madam ; a hundred times better than we do. They love like turtles : they give me an appetite for it,’—‘ You will confess, however that they love without delicacy.’—‘ Alas, Madam ; delicacy is a refinement of art ; they have instinct from Nature, and that instinct renders them happy. They talk of love in town, but it is practised only in the country. They have in sentiment what we have in imagination. I have tried, like other people, to love and to be loved in the world ; caprice and convenience order and disorder every thing. A connection is nothing more than a rencontre ; here inclination makes the choice : you will see in the sports that I give them, how their simple and tender hearts seek each other.

other without knowing it, and attract each other by turns.'---' You give me,' said Belisa, 'a picture beyond expectation. They say these people are so much to be lamented!'---' They were so, Madam, some years ago; but I have found out the secret of rendering their condition more agreeable.'---' O, you shall tell me your secret,' interrupted Belisa briskly, 'I want to make use of it.'---' It is your own fault if you do not. It is this; I have an income of forty thousand livres a year; of this I spend ten or twelve at Paris in the two seasons that I pass there; eight or ten at my house in the country; and by this management I have twenty thousand livres to throw away on exchanges.'---' What exchanges?'---' I have lands well cultivated, meadows well watered, orchards well fenced and well planted.'---' What then?'---' What then! Lucas, Blaise, Nicholas, my neighbours and my good friends, have grounds lying fallow or poor; they have not wherewith to cultivate them; I swap mine with them for theirs; and the same extent of land, which hardly maintained them after two crops, makes them rich. The ground which was barren under their hands, becomes fertile in mine. I chuse the seed for it, the plant, the manure, the husbandry that suits it, and as soon as it is in good condition, I bethink me of some new exchange. These are my amusements.'---' Charming!' cried Belisa, 'you understand agriculture then?'---' A little, Madam, and I instruct myself in it; I oppose the theory of the learned to the experience of farmers; I endeavour to correct what I see defective in the speculations of the one, and in the practice of the other: and the study is amusing.'---' Oh! I believe it, and I would fain give into it. Why? You ought to be adored in these parts; these poor labourers ought to consider you as their father.'---' Yes, Madam, we have a great affection for each other.'---' I am very happy my lord, that chance has given me such a neighbour! Let us see each other often, I entreat of you: I want to pursue your labours, to follow your method, and become your

your rival in the hearts of these good people.'—' You cannot have, Madam, any rivals of either sex where it ever is your desire to please, and even where it is not.'

Such was their first interview; and from this moment see Belisa a villager, entirely taken up with agriculture, conversing with farmers, and reading nothing but the *Complete System of Agriculture*. The count invited her to one of his holiday-feasts, and presented her to the peasants as a new benefactress, or rather as their sovereign. She was a witness of the love and respect they had for him. Sentiments of this kind are catching: they are so natural and so tender! it is the highest of all encomiums, and Belisa was touched with them even to jealousy; but how distant was this jealousy from hatred! "It must be confessed," said she, "that they have great reason to love him. Exclusive of his good actions, nobody in the world is more amiable."

From this time the most intimate, and in appearance the most philosophical connection was established between them. Their conversation turned only on natural studies, on the means of renovating this old mother earth, who exhausts herself for the sake of her children. Botany pointed out to them the plants salutary to the flocks and herds, and those that were hurtful; mechanics afforded them the powers to raise water at a small expence to the top of dry hills, and to soften the fatigues of animals destined to labour; natural history taught them how to calculate the economical inconveniences and advantages in the choice of these animals; practice confirmed or corrected their observations; and they made their experiments in small, in order to render them less expensive. The holiday came round, and their sports suspended their studies.

Belisa and the philosopher mingled in the dances of the villagers. Belisa perceived with surprize that not one of them was taken up in admiring her. "You will now," said she to her friend, "suspect me of a very strange piece of coquetry: but I will not dissemble with you. I have been told a hundred times that I was handsome;

handsome; I have likewise, much beyond these peasants, the advantage of dress; yet I do not see, in the eyes of the young country-fellows, any traces of emotion at the sight of me. They think only of their companions; they have no souls but for them.'---' Nothing is more natural, Madam,' said the count. ' Desire never comes without some ray of hope; and these poor people find you no otherwise beautiful, than as they do the stars and the flowers.'---' You surprise me,' said Belisa; ' is it hope that renders us sensible?'---' No; but it directs our sensibility.'---' We never love then, but with the hope of pleasing?'---' No, to be sure, Madam; or else who could help loving you?'---' A philosopher, then, has gallantry?' replied Belisa, with a smile. ' I speak the truth, Madam, though no philosopher; but if I deserved that name, I should only have the more sensibility. A true philosopher is a man, and glories in being so. Wisdom never contradicts nature, but when nature is in the wrong.' Belisa blushed, the count was confounded, and they sat some time with their eyes fixed on the ground, without daring to break silence. The count endeavoured to renew the conversation on the beauties of the country; but their discourse was confused, broken, and without continuation: they no longer knew what they said, and still less what they were going to say. They parted at last, she thoughtful and he lost; and both afraid that they had said too much.

The youth of the neighbouring villages assembled the next day, in order to give them a feast: its uprightness composed all its ornament. Belisa was transported at it; but the catastrophe surprized her. The master of the feast had made songs in praise of her and the count, and the couplets closed with saying, that Belisa was the elm, and the count the ivy. The count knew not whether he should silence them, or take the matter in jest; but Belisa was offended at it. ' Pardon them, Madam,' said the count to her, as he reconducted her home; ' these good people speak what they

they think; and know no better. I should have put them to silence, but that I had not the courage to make them unhappy.' Belisa made him no answer, and he retired overwhelmed with sorrow for the impression this innocent sport had made on her.

' How unhappy am I!' said Belisa, after the departure of the count. ' See, here again is a man I am going to love. It is so clear, that even these peasants perceive it: it will be with him as with all others, a slight flame, a spark. No; I will see him no more: it is shameful to be desirous of inspiring a passion, when we are not susceptible of it ourselves. The count would deliver himself up to me without reserve, and with the greatest confidence. I should make a very respectable man unhappy if I were to break with him.' The next day he sent to know if she was to be seen. ' What shall I do? If I refuse him to-day, I must see him to-morrow; if I persist in not seeing him more, what will he think of this change? What has he done that can have displeased me? Shall I leave him to think that I mistrust him or myself? After all, what if he should assure me that he loves me? And if he should love and I obliged to love him? I will bring him to reason; I will give him a sketch of my character; he will esteem me the more for it: I must see him.' The count comes.

' I am going to surprise you,' said she to him; ' I have been on the point of breaking with you.'---' With me, Madam! why? What is my crime?'---' Being nimble and dangerous. I declare to you that I came here in quest of repose; that I fear nothing so much as love; that I am not formed for a solid engagement; that I have the lightest, the most inconstant soul in the world; that I despise transitory likings; and that I have not a sufficient fund of sensibility to entertain a durable passion. This is my character: I give you warning. I can answer for myself with respect to friendship; but as to love, you must not depend on me; and that I may have no cause to reproach myself, I would neither

neither inspire it, nor be inspired with it myself.'---
‘Your sincerity encourages mine,’ replied the count; ‘you are now going to know me in my turn. I have conceived for you, without the least suspicion or intention, a love the most tender and violent: it is the happiest thing that could have happened to me, and I resign myself up to it with all my heart. Say what you please to me. You think yourself light and inconstant; I think I know the character of your soul better than yourself.’---‘No, Sir, I have tried myself, and now you shall judge.’ She told him the story of the president and that of the young page. ‘You loved them, Madam! you loved them! you discourage yourself without cause. Your anger against the president was without consequence. The first emotion is always for the dog, but the second for the lover: so nature has ordered it. As to the cooling of your love towards the page, that would not have been more durable. An eye lost always produces this effect: but by degrees we become accustomed to it. As to the duration of a passion I must be ingenuous with you. What a madman is he who requires impossibilities! I ardently desire to please you; I shall make it the happiness of my life: but if your inclination should happen to grow faint, it would be a misfortune, but no crime. What! because there is no pleasure in life without its alloy, must we deprive ourselves of every thing, renounce every thing? No, Madam, we must make choice of what is good! and pardon both in ourselves, and others, what is not quite so well, or what is really evil. We lead an easy, quiet life here; nothing but love is wanting to embellish it; let us make the experiment. If love should vanish, friendship still remains, and as vanity has no share in it, the friendship that survives love is the sweeter, the more intimate, the more tender.’---‘Really, Sir,’ said she, ‘this is strange philosophy.’ ‘Simple and natural, Madam! I could make romances as well as another; but life is not a romance: our principles, as well as sentiments, ought to be founded in

In nature. Nothing is easier than to imagine prodigies of love ; but all those heroes exist only in the brains of authors ; they say what they please ; let us do what we can. It is a misfortune, without doubt, to cease to please ; it is a greater to cease to love ; but the height of misery is to pass one's life in fear and self-constraint. Confide in yourself, Madam, and deign to confide in me. It is cruel enough not to be able to love always, without dooming one's self never to love at all. Let us imitate our villagers ; they do not examine whether they shall love long ; it is sufficient for them to feel that they love. I surprize you ! You have been brought up in the region of chimeras. Believe me, you have a good disposition : return to truth ; suffer yourself to be guided by Nature ; she will conduct you much better than Art, which loses itself in the void, and reduces sentiment to nothing by means of analysing it.'

If Belisa was not persuaded, she was much less confirmed in her first resolution ; and from the moment that reason wavers, it is easy to overturn it. Belisa submitted without difficulty, and never did mutual love render two hearts more happy ! Resigned with the utmost freedom one to the other, they forgot the world, they forgot themselves. All the faculties of their souls united in one, formed a mere vortex of fire, of which love was the centre, and pleasure the fuel.

This first ardour abated, and Belisa was alarmed ; but the count confirmed her. They return to their rural amusements. Belisa found that nature was embellished ; that the heavens were more serene, and the country more delightful ; the sports of the villagers pleased her more than before : they recalled a delicious remembrance. Their labours became more interesting. ' My lover,' said she to herself, ' is the god who encourages them : his humanity, his generosity, are the rivulets which fertilize these fields.' She loved to converse with the husbandmen on the benefits showered upon them by this mortal, whom they called their father.

Love brought home to herself all the good they said of him. Thus she passed the whole summer in loving, in admiring him, in seeing him make others happy, and in making herself happy also.

Belisa had proposed to the count to pass the winter out of town, and he had answered her with a smile, 'With all my heart.' But as soon as the country began to grow bare; that walking was impracticable; that the days became rainy, the mornings cold, and the evenings long; Belisa perceived with bitterness, that weariness took possession of her soul, and that she wanted to revisit Paris. She confessed it with her usual frankness. 'I told you so before hand; you would not believe me: the event but too well justifies the ill opinion I had of myself.'---'What event?'---'Ah, my dear count! since I must tell you, I grow tired: I love you no longer.'---'You grow tired! that is very possible,' replied the count, with a smile; 'but you do not love me the less: it is the country that you love no longer.'---'Alas! Sir, why do you flatter me? All places, all seasons, are agreeable with those we love.'---'Yes, in romances, I have told you so already, but not in nature.'---'It is in vain for you to say so,' insisted Belisa; 'I know full well, that two months ago I could have been happy with you in a desert.'---'Without doubt, Madam, such is the intoxication of a growing passion; but this first flame lasts only for a time. Love, when made happy, grows calm and moderate. The soul, from that instant, less agitated, begins to become sensible to impressions from without; we are no longer alone in the world; we begin to feel the necessity of dissipation and amusement.'---'Ah, Sir! to what do you reduce love?'---'To truth, my dear Belisa.'---'To nothing, my dear count, to nothing! You cease to be my only happiness, I have therefore ceased to love you.'---'No, my soul's idol, no! I have not lost your heart, and I shall be always dear to you.'---'Always dear! yes, to be sure; but how?'---'As I would wish to be.'---'Alas! I perceive my own injustice

too clearly to conceal it from myself.'---' No, Madam, you are not unjust, you love me sufficiently: I am content, and would not be loved more. Will you be more difficult than I?'---' Yes, Sir, I shall never forgive myself the having been able to grow tired of the most amiable man in the world.'---' And I, Madam, and I, who have nothing to boast of, am tired also at times of the most adorable of all women, and I forgive myself for it.'---' What, Sir! are you ever tired of me?'---' Even of you. Nevertheless, I love you more than my life. Are you satisfied now?'---' Come, Sir, let us return to Paris!'---' Yes, Madam, with all my heart; but remember, that the month of May shall find us in the country again.'---' I don't believe it,'---' I assure you if will, and more fond than ever.'

Belisa, on her return to town, began to give herself up to all the amusements which the winter occasions, with an avidity which she thought insatiable. The count, on his side, abandoned himself to the torrent of the world, but with less eagerness. By degrees Belisa's ardour abated. The suitors appeared long to her: she grew tired at the play. The count took care to see her seldom; his visits were short, and he chose those hours when she was surrounded by a multitude of adorers: she asked him one day in a very low voice, 'What do you think of Paris?'---' Every thing amuses, nothing attaches me.'---' Why do not you come and sup with me?'---' You have seen me so often, Madam! I am discreet; the world has its turn, and I shall have mine.'---' You are still persuaded, then, that I love you?'---' I never talk of love in town. What think you, Madam, of the new opera?' pursued he alone, and the conversation became general.

Belisa was always comparing the count with every thing that appeared best, and the comparison always turned out in his favour. 'Nobody,' said she, 'has that candour, that simplicity, that evenness of character; nobody has that goodness of soul and elevation of sentiment. When I recollect our conversation, all our

young people seem nothing more than well taught parrots. He may well doubt that one can cease to love him after having known him! but, no; it is not the good opinion he has of himself, it is the good opinion he has of me, that gives him this confidence. How happy should I be were it well founded!"

Such were Belisa's reflections; and the more she perceived her inclination for him revive, the more she was at ease with herself. In short, the desire of seeing him again became so strong, that she could not resist writing to him. He repaired to her; and accosting her with a smile, "What, Madam," said he, "a tête à tête! I shall create a thousand jealousies."---"Nobody, Sir," said Belisa, "has a right to be so; and you know that I have only friends: but you, are not you afraid of disturbing some new conquest?"---"I never made but one in my life," replied the count; "she expects me in the country, and I shall go this spring to see her."---"She would be to be pitied if she were in town: you are so taken up here that she would run the hazard of being neglected."---"She would amuse herself, Madam, and think nothing of me."---"No more of this heating about the bush," resumed she; "why do I see you so seldom, and for so short a time?"

"To let you enjoy at full liberty all the pleasures of your youth."---"You can never give me too much of your company, Sir; my house is yours; look upon it as such, it will flatter me: I request it, and I have acquired a right to exact it."---"No, Madam, exact nothing: I should despair if I displeased you: but permit me not to see you again till the summer." This contumacy piqued her. "Go, Sir," said she to him, with anger, "go seek pleasures in which I have no part. I have merited your inconstancy." From that day she had not a moment's ease: she informed herself of all his proceedings; she sought and followed him with her eyes in the public walks and at the theatres; the women whom he saw became odious to her; she never ceased questioning his friends. The winter ap-

peared

peared intolerably long. Though it was but the beginning of March, some fine days happening, 'I must,' said she, 'confound him, and justify myself. I have been wrong hitherto, he has that advantage over me; but to-morrow he shall have it no longer.' She sent to request him to come to her; every thing was ready for their departure. The count arrives. 'Your hand,' said Belisa, 'to help me into my coach.' 'Where are we going then?' said he. 'To grow tired of ourselves in the country.' The count was transported with joy at these words. Belisa, at the movement of the hand that supported her, perceived the extasy and emotion herself had given birth to. 'O my dear count!' said she to him, pressing that hand which trembled beneath her's, 'what do I not owe you? You have taught me to love; you have convinced me that I was capable of it; and in clearing up my doubts, with respect to my own sentiments, you have done me the most pleasing violence: you have forced me to think well of myself, and to believe myself worthy of you. My love is satisfied. I have no longer any SCRUPLE, and I am happy.'

THE FOUR PHIALS;

or, The Adventures of Alcidonis of Megara

I REGRET the loss of faryism. It was to lively imaginations a source of innocent pleasures, and the handsomest way in the world of forming agreeable dreams. The climates of the east were formerly peopled with genii and fairies. The Greeks considered them as mediating beings between men and gods: witness the familiar dæmon of Socrates; witness the fairy which protected Alcidonis, as I am going to relate.

The fairy Galante had taken Alcidonis under her protection, even before his coming into the world. She presided at his birth, and endowed him with the gift of pleasing without any determined inclination to love. His youth was but the unfolding of those talents and graces which he had received as his lot.

He had passed his fifteenth year, when his father, one of the richest and most honourable citizens of Megara, on his sending him to Athens to perform his exercises, embraced him, and said thus: ‘ My dear son, you are going to mix in the world among a number of giddy young fellows, who launch out into the most outrageous abuse of women. Never believe them. Those fellows affect to despise them, only because they have not been able to render them despicable. For my own part to begin with your mother, my virtuous wife, I have found in the fair-sex that delicacy of sentiment, candour, and truth, of which few men are capable. Do as I have done; chuse an honest wife, of an even temper, solid character, and a sociable, and not austere virtue. There are women of this stamp every where. My consent shall follow your choice; I am a tender father, and desire nothing but your happiness.’ Alcidonis full of these lessons, arrives at Athens. His first visit was to Seliana, to whom he had recommendations. Seliana in her youth had been handsome and agreeable; she was still agreeable, but began to be no longer handsome. After the first compliments, ‘ What is your business here?’ said an old captain to him, who was husband to Seliana, and an old friend of his father. ‘ A fine thing indeed, at your age, to bury one’s self among the women! The Circus, the Piræus, these are the schools for you, and not that trifling circle which they call the *beau monde*. I am mad when I see a young fellow come to Athens! they ought to go to Sparta.’

Alcidonis was disconcerted by so warm an apostrophe; but Seliana took his part warmly. ‘ That is so like you,’ said she to her husband; ‘ Sparta, the Circus, the Piræus! well, and pr’ythee, now, what do they learn in these famous schools?—‘ To get money and fight,’ replied the husband, roughly. ‘ To get money! very noble indeed! To fight! very agreeable! The first is unworthy the ambition of a gallant man, and the second is learned but too soon.’—‘ Not so soon, Madam, not

so very soon as you imagine. I'm afraid that after passing his youth at the toilette, a man would make neither a good officer, nor a good soldier.'---' Well! for my part, there is nothing more hideous and disagreeable in my eyes, than a man who has never learned any thing but to fight. One would imagine, that you came into the world only to cut one another's throats. Peace has its talents and virtues, as well as war. Men are not always at the head of a troop.'---' So much the worse by all the gods, so much the worse! I wish it were forbid, even in time of peace to quit the colours on pain of death.'---' How, Sir! would not you allow us so much as one man!'---' You should have men enough, Madam: you should have all the refuse. There are numbers quite useless to the state!'---' Very fine, indeed! you would reduce us then to the refuse of the common wealth. The ladies are infinitely obliged to you!'---' I acquit them of all obligations.'---' No, Sir, we are citizens, and we generously give up to the state all those figures that displease us, all faces that fright one, all those fierce characters that delight in nothing but murder, and are good for nothing else.'---' And you reserve to yourselves the handsome men who love to live; is it not so?'---' Certainly.'---' That is right; and the Areopagus, to be sure, will take care to pass it into a decree to please you. Pardon me, Sir, my wife is a fool. I leave you; for I can stand it no longer. Oh, Hercules! Madam, must I be your husband! These things happen to nobody but myself.' At these words he went out stamping with his feet, and clapped the door roughly after him.

'Here is a strange family!' said Alcidonis. 'Pray Madam, have you often scenes of this kind?'---' Why, yes,' replied she coldly, 'always when I have company.'---' And, when you are alone?'---' He grumbles still, but not quite so loud.'---' And how came you to marry him?'---' As all the world marry, for convenience and interest. As to any thing else, he is the best man in the world. When I am weary of him, I contradict

tradict him ; he grows impatient and walks off when I do what I please. 'I advise you to shew him respect. His friendship is not to be neglected, and may be of use to you. Do you bring recommendations to many people here ?'—‘ To my father’s particular friends, but the number is not great.’—‘ So much the better, we shall see each other the oftener. I wish it for your own sake ; for, on entering into a new world, the wisest have need of a guide.’—‘ Will you, Madam, condescend to be mine ?’—‘ Either I or my husband, you shall take your choice.’—‘ My choice is made, Madam.’ Thus passed their first interview.

When the husband returned, ‘ You are a strange man,’ said Seliana to him, ‘ your behaviour has frightened away this young man.’—‘ Whom you wanted to render familiar ?’—‘ I understand you, Sir, henceforth I shall order my door to be shut against him.’—‘ How ! no, Madam ! I am not jealous. It would be beginning a little too late. I was not jealous in the bloom of your youth, and I shall hardly be so now you are grown older.’—‘ How extremely gallant ! but I am used to it. Remember, however, that you owe a visit to this son of your old friend.’—‘ I shall see him, Madam. I know life, and you may trust to my behaviour.

The day after, at his entering into Alcidonis’s lodging, he resumed the conversation of the night before. ‘ Well,’ said he to him, ‘ are you going to give into the effeminate manners of the Athenian youth ? My wife has disposed you for it no doubt. Take care ; not of her, for her time is past, thank Heaven, but take care of the rest of her sex. They are most dangerous syrens. No safety in any dealings with them. They take you, deceive you, and quit you, without shame. One would think, on seeing them amusing themselves with the men, that we were made only for their play things.’—‘ If so,’ said Alcidonis, ‘ the women of Athens are not like those of Megara !’—‘ At Megara it is the very same as here. You are like your old father. The good man would swear only by his chaste

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chaste better half. It was out of complaisance to him, that she dressed and saw company; out of ~~piety~~, that she shut herself up with a young priest of Misere ; by way of retirement, that she went to pass her evenings at a little house which he had fitted up for himself : he relied upon her virtue with the most absolute confidence in the world.'---' He had reason no doubt; and I beg you, Sir, to respect my mother's memory.'

'Your mother! your mother was a woman. ~~Woman~~ you have had some being made on purpose; I have seen enough of them, but I know none but my termagant that is truly faithful; and what is still more it is I that made her so. I rendered her virtuous in spite of her teeth; but I have not been able to root out those seeds of coquetry which nature or example plants in them almost at their birth. I would lay a wager that she is even capable of attempting to seduce you, for the sake of the pleasure of laughing at you. You would not be the first whom she has reduced to despair. She used to amuse herself formerly at this pretty little diversion, and then she has given me accounts of it, at which she laughed as if she had been mad. By good luck she grows older, and the danger is no longer so great.'

Alcidonis's thoughts was taken up a considerable part of the night with what he had heard. 'The women, here,' said he, 'are very terrible then!' And he went to sleep with a resolution of avoiding them,

The fairy Galante appeared to him in a dream, and said, 'Nothing is so much like man ~~as woman~~. All the good, all the evil that is said of them, is true in particular, but false in general. One should neither trust in every one, nor distrust every one. Live with the women, but resign yourself to them only at times. I have not given you a determined character, that you may be flexible to theirs. A precise man is an unlovable man. You will be charming if they cry, do whatever we please with him. But it is not enough to please; one must know likewise how to love; and to love neither too much nor too little. There are three sorts

sorts of love; / passion, liking, and fancy. All the art of being happy consists in the proper disposition of these three shades. For this purpose, here are four phials, which you alone shall use. They are as different in their virtues as colours. You are to drink out of the purple phial, in order to be in love to distraction; out of the rose coloured one, to skin the surface of sentiment and pleasure; out of the blue one, to taste of it without uneasiness and intoxication; and out of the white one, to come to yourself again.' At these words the fairy vanished like a vapour.

Alcidonis awakes quite ravished with so charming a dream. But what was his surprize, at finding in reality the four phials at his elbow! ' As for the trial,' said he, ' I shall make it at my leisure.' He gets up full of gratitude to the fairy, and the same day revisits Seliana. She was alone. ' You have seen my husband?' says she. ' Has not he been declaiming against gallantry? ---' Violently.' ---' He has told you a thousand frightful stories of women?' ---' He has.' ---' I hope he excepted me.' ---' Only in the article of fidelity.' ---' Poor man!' ---' He is persuaded that you are faithful to him; but he says that you are only the more dangerous on that account, and that you divert yourself most cruelly with those who have the misfortune to fall in love with you.' ---' Ah! how he abuses me! He would richly deserve But hold, I must have some respect to myself.' ---' Your virtue, he says, is of his own forging; and it is he that has made you honest.' ---' He!' ---' Yes, he; and in spite of your teeth.' ---' In spite of my teeth! upon my word! See whether he can make me virtuous in spite of my teeth.' ---' I must own that in your place And I should be glad, too, to revenge his insult to my mother.' ---' Your mother!' ---' Yes; he dared to tell me that my father was a fool, and that there is no man in the world but himself who is not so.' ---' Poor man! he has great reason to brag, truly! ---' But, once more, I must respect myself. No, Sir, I am no co-

quette;

quette; and since he obliges me to justify myself, I have a heart as tender, and more tender than another.'---' And what use do you make of that heart?'---' Alas! no use at all; but you may easily believe that it is not for his sweet looks that I keep it. I am prudent for my own sake, that I may not expose myself to the caprice, inconstancy, and ingratitude of men. I feel that if I loved I should love passionately, and I should wish to be passionately beloved.'---' Ah! and so you shall.'---' I dare not flatter myself with that; nothing is weaker, vainer, and more inconstant, than the love of your sex. They have their likings, their fancies; but the passion of love, that intoxication which is the greatest charm, and its only excuse, they are quite unacquainted with.'---' For my part, Madam, I know very well how to acquire that love which you deserve; and were I sure of a return, I should take a good dose of it!' Seliana smiled at Alcidonis's simplicity, (for the fairy had given him that unaffected air, that ingenuous manner, which coquettes are so fond of.) 'No,' said she, 'people are not inflamed all at once! and how can we possibly be in love? We do not know each other yet.'---' At your own time, Madam; I am in no hurry. To-morrow we shall know each other better.'---' I shall see you to-morrow, then!'---' Yes, Madam.'---' After dinner; do you hear? For I would spare you the disagreeable circumstance of finding my husband at home. We shall be alone, and at liberty, and I shall talk reason to you.'

Alcidonis repaired to the appointment, with his phials in his pocket. Seliana received him in the most tempting dishabille. 'See there,' said Alcidonis on seeing her, 'the privilege of beauty: the less ornament, the more charms.' Seliana affected to blush. 'Do you know,' said she, 'that this pretended simplicity of yours makes you dangerous? One might be taken by it and be deceived.'---' I deceive you, Madam! I never deceived any body!'---' And you would begin with me?'---' No; I swear---'---' Why then said flat-

flattering discourse, those tender looks?'—‘ You are handsome; I have eyes; I speak what I see; there is no flattery in that.’—‘ Why, indeed, your tranquillity makes it evident that you have no design to seduce me.’—‘ Nay, nay, if you would but have it so, that tranquillity should soon vanish.’—‘ Oh to be sure, and to be all on fire you only wait for my consent; is it not so?’—‘ Nothing else; you need only say the word.’—‘ Indeed you are very fine, with that air of yours so cold and so determined.’—‘ It is because I am certain of what I do.’—‘ What if I should oblige you to shew some desire of being loved?’—‘ You may do it to any degree you please, I assure you.’—‘ I see, Alcidonis, that you don’t know what you promise, and what I might demand.’—‘ Demand, Madam! demand! my heart defies you. I will love you as much you please.’—‘ You will love me then, if I please, to distraction!’—‘ To distraction! It is all the same to me.’—‘ His simplicity charms me. Very well, then, I would have you vastly in love with me.’—‘ Passionately?’—‘ Passionately.’—‘ And you will love me in like manner?’—‘ I believe so.’—‘ That is not enough.’—‘ Well I am sure of it.’—‘ That is sufficient; now you shall see fine sport.’—‘ Where are you going?’—‘ Yours; allow me but one minute.’

The credulous Alcidonis, having retired into a corner, drank up the elixir in the purple phial, to the very last drop. He appears again, his eyes inflamed, his heart beating, and his voice almost extinct. The more foolery, the more gallantry: his language was rapid, broken, full of matter and warmth. Words were not sufficient to declare his sentiments. Inarticulate accents supplied the place of speech! a vehement gesture, an impetuous action, redoubled their energy. This eloquence put Seliana quite beside herself. She is moved, agitated, lost: she hardly knows him again, and can scarce conceive so wonderful a change. She would fain to doubt, to fear, to hesitate still: vain efforts! Her heart relents, her eyes brighten, her reason

son fails ; and one would have thought the very moment after, that she had also drank of the same phial.

Two months passed away in transports which they found it difficult to confine within any bounds. The husband was perpetually rallying Alcidonis on his assiduities to his wife. ‘ Poor dupe,’ said he to him, ‘ you would not believe me. You are caught ; I am glad of it. Throw yourself away in dangling after her : you have a fine time of it ! ’ Alcidonis took the best revenge he could for this insulting irony. But his passion was no longer seconded : Seliana’s grew every day weaker and weaker. Seliana sufficed him ; but he was no longer able to suffice Seliana. She wanted dissipation, diversion, and to return to the world, which she had forgot. Alcidonis was hurt, and saw with concern that she amused herself with every thing, while he was taken up with nothing but her. He became pensive, uneasy, and jealous ; and went so far that she was offended and resolved to dismiss him.

‘ It is true,’ said she to him, ‘ I have loved you ; I was mad. I am now come to my senses again ; do you do so too. We are no way enjoined to carry on love, even to decay. Everything has an end, even love itself. Mine is enfeebled ; you have chid me for it. It is become extinct ; you distract yourself about it. So much the worse for you : but I cannot help it.’—‘ How ! perfidious ! ungrateful ! perfjured woman ! ’—‘ Go on ; vent your reproaches, if that will comfort you.’—‘ Ah, just Heaven, how am I treated ! ’—‘ Like a child, in whom we pardon every thing.’—‘ Are these, perfidious woman ! the oaths that you have sworn a hundred times, to love me to the last gasp ? ’—‘ Rash oathe, which bind us to nothing ; mad, whoever makes them ; mad whoever trusts them. Would you believe any one who, on setting down to table, should swear by all the gods that he would always have the same stomach ? ’—‘ The same stomach ! what an image ! Is this your boasted delicacy ? ’—‘ Another piece of folly. We disavow the empire of the senses, at the

very instant we are their slaves. I am a woman, I love like a woman, and you ought not to have expected that Nature should work a miracle in your favour.' Alcidonis, at these words, tore his hair with despair. 'Very fine,' pursued she; 'what is that for? Will you be more amiable, or better beloved, when you are bald? Hark ye, Alcidonis! I have still a compassionate friendship for you.'—'Ah, cruel woman! is it friendship or compassion that I require of you?'—'You must really bring yourself to that; I feel nothing more for you. Which of the two is to blame, the party who ceases to love, or that which ceases to be agreeable? The question is not yet, nor will soon be determined. In the mean time, be advised, and take your resolution with courage.'—'It is taken, ungrateful woman; it is taken,' said he, withdrawing to drink; and I need not say, that he had recourse to the white phial.

On a sudden his senses were all calm and his reason returned. 'Indeed,' said he, returning to Seliana with an easy and sedate air, 'I was a fool to make myself uneasy. We have been lovers; now we are friends. All this must happen in life. Passion is a fever: when it is over, there is an end of the matter. We are not obliged to see one another any longer than is agreeable, nothing is more natural than to change when we are tired. You loved me as long as you were able. It would have been ridiculous to pique yourself on a constancy that was painful! Enjoy, Madam, the right your beauty gives you of multiplying your conquests. I am too happy in having been of the number. Every man in his turn, and I wish you much entertainment.'

Seliana was as much surprised as piqued at this coldness. She wished, indeed, that he should console himself, but neither so soon, nor so easily. So sudden a change was inconceivable. On reflection she was persuaded, that this apparent tranquillity was only a pretended disgust, and she failed not to tell some of her friends, that the poor boy was mad with despair, that

that he had put her into a terrible fright, and that she had all the difficulty in the world to prevent him from committing violence on himself. The day following, Alcidonis went to sup at the voluptuous Alcipe's, with some of the youngest and handsomest women in Athens. ‘ All one to me,’ said he to himself, ‘ the purple phial is dry; and it would be to no purpose for the fairy to replenish it, for may I die if I would taste a single drop of it.’ As soon as he saw all those beauties, ‘ Ah! now let us tifile for once: this is the moment for whim and trolick.’ He drinks of the rose-coloured phial, and immediately his eyes and desires wander without fixing.

Chance seated him at a table next to a fair beauty, with languishing looks, and an extreme modesty and timidity, with which he was sensibly touched; but he had on the other side a *brunette*, dazzling the beholders with her freeness and vivacity. He had a great mind to the latter, yet was deeply smitten with the former; and on farther consideration would have preferred the fair beauty, had it not been for a certain *je-ne-sçai-quoi* which inclined him to the brown. This *je-ne-sçai-quoi* determined his choice. He shewed her all the assiduities of a warm gallantry; which she received with an air of inattention, as an homage that was due to her. Alcidonis was piqued at it. Whim, as well as passion, is irritated by obstacles. Excited by the desire of pleasing, he formed all the delight of the entertainment. Corinna, his charming *brunette*, saw that the ladies envied her his conquest. She at length perceived the value of it, and some looks of complacency infused hope into the heart of her new lover.

The hour of parting now arrived. Corinna rises, he follows. ‘ You will attend me, then,’ said she to him, receiving the offer of his hand. ‘ I am sensible of all the sacrifices you make me.’ The swain did not make her none. ‘ Passion, I say, I carry off the handsomest woman in the world.’ ‘ A

appeared to me pretty well.'---' Pretty well! Your commendations are very sparing, indeed! Will you only call Cleonida *pretty well*? Those large eyes, and regular features, that majestic figure one would take her for a goddess.'---' True, the stately Juno.'---' You wicked devil! and Amate, what do you think of her? That air of voluptuousness, that attracting negligence, which seems to invite pleasure?'---' Right; the picture of opportunity neglected!'---' Neglected; a cruel phrase, I will not repeat it; it would pass into a proverb. I hope, at least, that you will show some favour to the ingenuous and timid air of Cephisa; that lively complexion, that tender look, that mouth which is afraid to smile, and yet when it smiles is so beautiful: what say you to her?'---' That she wants nothing but a soul.'---' And you would be glad to give her yours?'---' I confess that if it had not been for yourself, she should have had the apple.'---' Alas! and what would she have done with it? Nothing is more cold, more indolent, more insensible, than Cephisa.'---' And therefore she had only my first glance.'---' Yet I caught you, when supper was almost over, with your eyes fixed upon her.'---' True, I admired her as I would a fine model in wax.'---' Right; a fine model, if you please; but the general opinion is, that this model stands in great need of drapery.'

While they thus run over the objects of Corinna's jealousy, they arrived at her house. 'Will you walk up for a moment?' said she to Alcidonis; 'it is early; we will have a little chat.' Alcidonis was transported. The fairy, who had made him so censorious with Corinna, knew what she was doing. The most flattering compliment to a handsome woman, is the abuse of her rivals; and this she had taken well at his hands.

'Alcidonis,' pursued Corinna, 'to know, in my turn, the greatest ill, you think of me.'---' The ill, alas! is this, however, that you have given me time, or occasion to do wrong. You are surrounded with illusion. That you are not a perfect beauty, would conceal no formity.'

formity itself: I should have taken it for beauty. I see you, I am dazzled, intoxicated, transported! this is my case. It is an infatuation, a madness, whatever you please; but nothing in the world is truer; and you can make me, by a single word, the happiest or most miserable of men.'---' Madnes indeed,' cried she, seeing him at her knees; 'you see me by chance; you love me, if one may believe it, and dare confess it to me—Do you know whether I merit this? Do you know whether I can make any return to it?'---' No, Madam, I know nothing. You are, perhaps, the most cruel of women, the most inconstant, the most perfidious. That fine person, those charming features, may conceal an insentible soul. I fear it, yet I will run the hazard of it; and though the danger were as great again, it is not in my power to avoid it.'---' Ah! I perceive plainly by these strokes the truth of your general character. You, Alcidonis, who are the most dangerous of men, and the person whom of all mankind I should most dread to love---'---' Why so? what have you heard of me?'---' That you are one who love passionately; and a man who loves passionately is insupportable;—that you abandon yourself distractedly; that you love like a madman, and want to be loved in the same manner. If we do not love as passionately as yourself, then come nothing but complaints and reproaches. You become sulky, uneasy, and jealous. There is no knowing how to quit you, and no possibility of keeping you.'---' It is true, Madam, that I have given into these absurdities; but I am now thoroughly cured. You may take me with safety; and I will sign my discharge beforehand.'---' Do not imagine, Sir, that I am jesting with you: what but liberty forms the charms of love! Without these a lover becomes a husband, and indeed it would be no misfortune to become a widow'---' I understand reason, my beautiful Corinna, and you may depend upon me.'---' You would give your word of honour, then, to a woman who should entertain a weakness for you,

to retire without making any bustle, as soon as she should have told you as a friend, I have loved you, but now I love you no longer?"---" To be sure: I have learned to live, and you need only try me."---" Well, I will then; but remember, that I engage myself to love you no longer than you shall be agreeable."

"I see plainly," said Alcidonis within himself, "that here the white phial will be of great service to me." He was mistaken; he had no occasion for it: the impression of the rose coloured one very soon vanished of itself. He was yet at Corinna's, and yet the idea of the other beauties he had seen at Alcipe's presented itself to his imagination. "Such a one is lively," says he, "but that is all; no sentiment, no delicacy. That other changes her lovers as she does her clothes. . To-morrow I should be dismissed, if to-morrow any other amuses her. I should have a fine time of it, to throw away my sighs on her! I should have done much better to have bestowed them on that languishing fair beauty, whose eyes were raised towards me in so tender, so affecting a manner. Corinna speaks ill of Cephisa, and therefore Cephisa must have merit. She is not very animated; but what a pleasure it would be to animate her! A woman naturally lively is so to all the world; but such a one would be so to me alone. Come, let me go and see her: besides I should not care to be dismissed. Corinna shall find that I am not one of those who are to be dropped as she pleases, and that I know how to give a dismissal full as well as herself."

He repeats to Cephisa the same things that he said to Corinna, but with more discretion. "Is it possible!" cried she, without any emotion. "What! you would be unhappy if I were not to love you?"---" More unhappy than I can express."---" I am sorry for it, for I do not know how to love."---" Oh! my beautiful Cephisa, with that enchanting smile, that tender look, that voice which goes to the very soul, you do not know how to say!"---" No, indeed!"---" But if I should teach you?"---" You would do the great pleasure, for I am very

very curious. But so many have attempted it, and not one has succeeded. My husband himself would lose all his labour.'—‘ Your husband; I believe it; but have you had lovers?’—‘ Many, and those some of the handsomest and most tender.’—‘ And did you make them happy?’—‘ No; for they all complained that I did not love them. It was not my fault; I did all in my power. Only think! I used now and then to take four at a time, in order to endeavour, among the number, to love at least one or two: yet all to no purpose.’

‘ This,’ said Alcidonis, ‘ is a very rare instance of ingenuity; but let us not be discouraged, my dear; you will love me.’—‘ Do you think so?’—‘ I do think so: you have sensibility?’—‘ Yes, at times, here and there; but it passes away in a moment.’—‘ This is certainly a disease. Have you, in order for your cure, offered up any sacrifices to Venus?’—‘ My husband has offered up a great many; but he always found me the same at his return from the temple.’—‘ And why did he not carry you there?’—‘ He took care not to do that: the priest was young, and wanted to initiate me.’—‘ Initiate you! And do you know what that means?’—‘ Alas! not I; I know nothing of it.’—‘ Shall I shew you?’ resumed Alcidonis, taking some liberties with her. ‘ Softly Sir,’ cried she, ‘ you act as if I loved you; I am not in love with you yet.’—‘ How should you know that, unless we make some experiments?’—‘ I have made a thousand; but all that proves nothing. At first I think I love, and then I think I do not. It is better to wait till it comes; and if it comes, I will tell you.’

Alcidonis, from day to day, made some new progress on the indolent sensibility of Cephisa; but she was not yet come to the pitch that he wanted to bring her to. In order to heat her imagination, he proposed to meet her at a feast which was to be celebrated in honour of Venus. She consented, on condition that she should not be initiated. The day after, each of them, out of decency, repaired separately to their quarter.

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The girls and the boys, arrayed like the Graces and the Loves, sung hymns in honour of the goddess, and danced to the sound of the lyre, beneath the shade of a sacred grove which surrounded the temple.

Cephisa got there first. ‘ Ah! ’ said she to Alcidonis, ‘ I was looking for you; I have good news to tell you. The goddess has anticipated our vows: I think I now begin to love you in good earnest. This very night I have seen you in my sleep. You were pressing; I was animated.’—‘ Well! ’—‘ Well! I will tell you the rest at supper.’—‘ At supper! ’ replied Alcidonis, with an indifferent air, and his eyes fixed on the feast.—‘ At supper let it be, with all my heart. What a beautiful dancing girl is there! how charmingly that woman sings! ’—‘ We shall be alone, do you hear? ’—‘ Alone! very well. I should be glad to know who that handsome dancer is?’—‘ Alcidonis, you do not hear me! ’—‘ Pardon me, I do hear you; but I am looking out for somebody who may tell me—’—‘ Olt, ‘ Pamphilus! one word. Tell me who is that beautiful dancer? ’—‘ It is Chloe,’ says Pamphilus.—‘ I am to sup with her.’—‘ This evening? ’—‘ This very evening.’—‘ I should be glad to make one.’—‘ That cannot be.’—‘ I beseech you, my dear Pamphilus, by our friendship.’ ‘ You do not consider, Alcidonis,’ whispered the disordered Cephisa, ‘ you are to sup with me; I told you so.’—‘ True, I intended it; but I have promised my friend Pamphilus. My word is sacred, and I cannot break it.

He saw Chloe, found her adorable, as it is called, for a quarter of an hour, and insipid the moment after. He saw Phillira, the singer; he was smitten with her for an evening, and the next day tired of her. ‘ Alas, how fatiguing are whimsies! ’ says he; ‘ every instant new desires, without satisfaction. It is the torment of the Danaides. Away with these transitory beams of sentiment which revives so fast, and leave me no repose: let me drink oblivion to my follies! ’ He said, and emptied the white phial. He had now none left

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but the blue; and his happiness depended on the use he should make of it.

Alcidonis studied philosophy under Aristus the academician. Aristus dying, left behind him a young widow, one of the most virtuous and beautiful women in the world. The disciple of Aristus thought it his duty to give the widow all the consolation and assistance of friendship. Glycerium refused his offers with modesty mingled with sweetnes and pride. "I have little wealth!" says she, "and tell me, if my husband has left me a most valuable inheritance? I search for the golden mean, and the habit of self-command." So much prudence united to so much virtue deserved a delicate and lasting attachment. "What sayest thou?" says Alcidonis, "that I should drink out of the blue phial."

A soft and lively warmth diffuses itself through all his veins, not the restlessness of whim, not the transport of passion, but a delightful emotion, the presage of happiness. He burns to belong to Glycerium; he burns to have henceforth but one to tune with her, one life, and one soul, and giving way to his impatience, he proposes marriage to her. Glycerium was not insensible to this mark of love and esteem. "You are generous enough," said she, "to offer me your hand. I will deserve it by refusing it. I should be unworthy of it, if I accepted it." It was in vain that he urged his father's consent, that he made it a clause in her marriage to force him, that he impaled her with the reproaches that would throw out against himself, for having made then unhappy, she appealed to her health.

Glycerium, however, in her regret, wept without ceasing. The only slave she had left saw the grief that consumed her, but was not able to penetrate the cause. Should he attribute it to the death of her husband? What! lament, without ceasing, a philosophical husband! That was not natural. His mistress often went to a citizen of Argos, and the answers he returned her forced deep sighs from her. Curiosity or

zeal

zeal induced the slave to open one of Glycerium's letters. It was conceived in these terms.

' If you have not a heart of brass, you will be touched, my Lord, with the despair of an unfortunate woman, who would give her life for the liberty of her father. Aristus, my husband, to whom I was not ashamed to confess that I was born of a slave, spared no pains to before my father to my wishes. He caused him to be examined in vain. I learn at last that he is in your power, and leave it in indigence. I have made every thing that I have left; but, alas! I am not able to raise what you demand. My only resource now left me, is to offer myself as slave for my father. It is not just that I should be free, while my father is a slave. I am young; he is borne down by years. You may derive more advantage from my servitude than from his. My hands will insure themselves to labour; my heart is prepared for patience. Were I inclined to avail myself of the easy means which those of my age have in their power to seduce and interest the men, I should not be reduced to this cruel extremity; but slavery is less shameful than vice, and I make my choice without hesitation.'

The slave, struck with admiration and pity, carried the letter to Alcidonis. ' Ah!' cried he, his heart overcom, and his eyes swimming with tears? ' here then is the cause of her refusal! she was born a slave! What manners, then! Virtue, the empire's of the whole world. Fortune only should be blamed. What piety! what tenderness! You, Glycerium, you in slavery! Why have I not a throne to offer you! I conjure thee, by the gods, said he to the slave, ' keep this a secret. I will go.' The tears of thy miseries shall soon be wiped away, and thy zeal shall have its reward.'

Alcidonis repairs to Argos, and Glycerium's father is set free. The unknown stranger who procured him his liberty, gives him wherewith to defray his expences to Athens, and says to him at parting, ' You

are now going to see Glycerium ; you owe your liberty to her tenderness and virtue. It is in her power to be happy, and to render you so : and if the service I have justt now done you be dear to you, promise me to engage this virtuous daughter of yours to conceal her birth and your misfortunes from the eyes of the man who demands her in marriage. I know his respect for her is so great, that it would shock him to see her blush. Wherefore if your benefactor ever appears before you, suppress your gratitude ; for he would be known by you alone.'---' What !' said the old man melting into tears ! ' shall my daughter never know the hand that has broken my chains ?'---' No, replied Alcidonis ? ' overwhelm not Glycerium with this load of humiliation. It is one of those duties that debase the soul. Leave to her's, I conjure you, its nobleness and freedom.' The old man promised his deliverer to comply.

On his arrival at Athens, his daughter faints away at the sight of him. ' Oh ! my father ! said she to him ! ' what god grants you to my tears ? Has then your master's avarice at length relented ? ' ' Yes, my daughter,' replied the old man ' I know that I owe to your tenderness my life, and the happiness of coming to die in your arms.'

Alcidonis, at his return came to press Glycerium by all the tenderness of love to consent to their marriage. The old man had not been wanting to exhort his daughter to silence on the humbleness of their former condition. ' No,' replied she to him with spirit, ' it is less humiliating to confess, than to be silent : they whom it shall concern to know me, shall learn from myself who I am.'

' You choose then,' said she to Alcidonis, ' that I should open my soul to you ? While I was unhappy, I concealed my grief ; but you deserve to partake of my joy. Know not that my destiny decreed me to be born in servitude ?' I was emancipated ; but my father still groaned under it. Some propitious deity

him to me ; he is free ; he is here ; you shall see him. However, the blot of our servitude is not to be effaced ; and to console to you who we are, is to declare irreversibly, that neither your honour, nor my gratitude, will permit me to listen to your offers.'

' You do me injustice, Glycerium,' said Alcidonis, with an air of tenderness mingled with reproach. ' Do you think me less a philosopher, or less generous, than Aristus ? Did you conceal from him the misfortune of your birth ? No, certainly. Did not he despise the injustice of fortune and opinion ? I am his disciple : his precepts are engraved in my heart. Is it reproachful to follow his example ? Or do you imagine that I have not virtue enough to imitate him ? ' ' It is not virtue,' said she to him, smiling ; ' but prudence, that you want. Aristus had had time to try himself. You are not, like him, of an age at which we can answer for ourselves ; and I would save you the bitterness of repentance.'

Alcidonis, grieved at her invincible constancy, fell at Glycerium's feet, in order to move her by pity. In that moment appears the old man, whom he had delivered from slavery. ' What do I see ? Ah ! daughter ! ' cried he, ' it is he . . . ' and then all of a sudden calling to mind Alcidonis's prohibition, he stopped short, and remained with his eyes fixed on his deliverer, as it were inadvertently letting fall tears. ' What ! my father,' said Glycerium astonished, ' you know him then ? It is he, you say ! make an end. What has he done ? Where have you known him ? Alcidonis, you look down ! you blush ! My father views you with the most melting tenderness ! ' ' Ah ! I understand you both. My father, it is he who redeemed you ; it is to him that I owe my father.' ' Yes, my daughter, there is my benefactor.' ' Is this,' said Alcidonis, embracing the old man, who threw himself at his feet ? ' is this what you promised me ? ' ' Pardon me,' said the old man, ' my heart was too fond of my daughter ; I confessed my secret ; it is not my fault.' ' Well' (said the slave) ' now we all oblige this cruel daughter not

not to drive me to despair.' It is her hand, her heart, that I ask as the price of the happiness I restore to her.' The old man, struck to the heart, warmly reproached his daughter for a piece of ingratitude of which she was not guilty, and taking her trembling hand, put it into that of his deliverer. 'It is to your father that I owe it—that I owe this hand which you refuse me,' said Alcidonis to her tenderly, and kissing her hands.—'Console yourself,' replied Glycerium, with a smile, 'you owe him only my hand; my heart surrendered of itself.'

Alcidonis, transported, employed the remainder of the day in preparing to set out on the morrow for Megara. That night, while he enjoyed a gentle slumber, the fairy Galante appeared to him again, and said, 'Be happy, Alcidonis; love without uneasiness; possess without disgust: desire in order to enjoy; make others jealous, but never be so yourself. It is not advice that I now give you; it is your destiny that I unfold. You have drank of the spring of perfect happiness. I distribute with a lavish hand the purple and rose-coloured phials; but the blue bottle is a gift which I reserve for my favourites.'

LAUSUS AND LYDIA.

Lausus Equum Dormitor, Debellatorque Ferarum.

VIRG. ENE. vii.

THE character of Mezentius, king of Troy, is well known. A bad prince and a good father, cruel and tender by turns. He had nothing of the tyrant, nothing that shewed violence, as long as his desires knew no obstacle; but the calm of this haughty soul was the repose of a lion.

Mezentius had a son named Lausus, whose valour and beauty rendered him famous among the young heroes of Italy. Lausus had attended Mezentius in the war against the king of Paeneste. His father, at the very summit of joy, saw him, covered with blood,

fighting and vanquishing by his side. The king of Præneste, driven out of his territories, and seeking safety in flight, had left in the hands of the conqueror a treasure more precious than his crown, a princess, at that age wherein the heart has only the virtues of nature, and nature has all the charms of innocence and beauty. Every thing that the Graces in tears possell, either noble or affecting, was painted in Lydia's countenance. In her grief, courage, and dignity, one might discover the daughter of kings amidst the crowd of slaves. She received the first compliments of her enemies without haughtiness, without acknowledgement, as an homage due to her rank, the noble sentiments of which were not weakened by ill fortune.

She heard her father named, and at the name lifted up to Heaven her fine eyes filled with tears. All hearts were moved. Mezentius himself, astonished, forgot his pride and age. Prosperity which hardens weak souls, softens proud hearts, and nothing can be gentler than an hero after a victory. *

If the savage heart of old Mezentius was not able to resist the charms of his captive, what was the impression on the virtuous soul of young Lausus! He mourned over his exploits; he reproached himself with his victory: it cost Lydia tears. ‘Let her avenge herself,’ said he; ‘let her hate me as much as I love her; I have deserved it but too much!’ But an idea still more distressful presents itself to his imagination: he sees Mezentius, astonished, softened, pass on a sudden from rage to clemency. He judged rightly, that humanity alone had not effected this revolution; and the fear of having his father for a rival compleated his confusion.

At the age of Mezentius jealousy follows closely upon love. The tyrant observed the eyes of Lausus with an uneasy attention; he saw extinguished in them, all at once, that joy and ardour which had lighted up the face of the young hero on his first victory. He saw him disturbed: he caught some looks which it

was

wis but too easily to understand. From that instant he considered himself as betrayed; but nature interposed, and suspended his rage. A tyrant even in his fury constrains himself to think that he is just, and before he condemned his son, Mezentius laboured to convict him.

He began by dissembling his own passion with so much art, that the prince looked on his former fears as vain, and considered the attentions of love as nothing more than the effects of clemency. At first he affected to allow Lydia all the appearance of liberty: but the tyrant's court was full of spies and informers, the usual retinue of men of power; who, not being able to make themselves beloved, place their greatness in being feared.

His son was no longer afraid of paying Lydia a respectful homage. He mingled with his sentiments an interest so delicate and tender, that Lydia very soon began to reproach herself for the hatred which she thought she entertained for the blood of her enemy; while Lausus lamented that he had contributed to Lydia's misfortunes. He called the gods to witness that he was unable in his power to repair them. ‘The king my father,’ says he, ‘is as generous after victory, as untractable before battle: satisfied with victory, he is incapable of remorse. It is easier than ever for the King of Persia to engage him to a peace that shall be glorious to both.’ This peace will dry up your tears, beautiful Lydia; but will it wipe the remembrance of their crime who caused you to shed them? Why did I not see all my blood flow rather than those tears?’

Lydia's replies, which were full of modesty and greatness, betrayed to Lausus no warmer emotion than that of gratitude, though at the bottom of her heart she was but too sensible of the care he took to console her. She sometimes blushed for having listened to him with complaisance; but her father's intreks made it a law to her to avail herself of such a support.

In the mean time their conferences growing more frequent, became also more animated, more interesting, more intimate; and love made its way insensibly through respect and gratitude, as a flower, which, in order to blow, opens the slight texture in which it is enfolded.

Deceived more and more by the feigned tranquility of Mezentius, the credulous Laulus flattered himself, that he should very soon see his duty accord with his inclination: and nothing in the world, in his opinion, was easier, than to reconcile them. The treaty of peace which he had meditated, was reduced to two articles; to restore to the King of Pheneste his crown and his territories; and to make his marriage with the princess the bond of union between the two powers. He communicated this project to Lydia. The confidence he placed in it, the advantages he saw accruing from it, the transports of joy which the idea alone inspired him with, surprised the lovely captive. A smile, mingled with tears. "Generous prince," says she to him, "may Heaven fulfil the wishes you pour out for my father! I shall not be sorry that I am made the bridge of peace, and that your territories' being restored to you, may be accompanied with so much happiness." But the moment she was informed of all this, her first emotion caused her to hurriedly to sacrifice herself, but this was not the only support of his power, the only barrier between the people and him: another stroke would have rendered him completely master of his subjects, and have taken from him the only daughter, whom he could oppose to the public hatred. Here is the ruling passion of tyrants. Mezentius resolves to dissemble. He orders his son into his presence, talks to him good-humour, and bids him prepare to set out the next day for the frontiers of his territories, where he had left his army. The prince endeavoured to conceal the grief which wrung his soul, and set out without having time to take leave of Lydia.

The very day of Laulus's departure, Mezentius had caused

caused honourable conditions of peace to be proposed to the King of Præneste; the first article of which was his marriage with the daughter of the vanquished monarch. That unfortunate monarch hesitated not to consent, and the same ambassador that offered him peace brought back his agreement for an answer.

Laufus had in the court a friend, who had been attached to him from his infancy. A remarkable resemblance to the young prince had been the means of making the fortune of this young man, who was called Phanor; but they resembled each other still more in their dispositions than their figure; the same inclinations, the same virtues. Laufus and Phanor seemed to have but one soul. Laufus, at parting, had confided to Phanor his passion and his despair. The latter was therefore inconsolable on hearing of the marriage of Lydia with Mezentius; he thought it his duty to acquaint the prince with it. The situation of the lover at this news cannot be described; his heart is troubled, his reason forsakes him; and, in the distraction of a blind sorrow, he writes to Lydia the warmest and most impudent letter that love ever dictated. Phanor was charged with the delivery of it. He went to her at the hazard of his life, if he should be discovered. He was so. Mezentius, enraged, orders him to be laden with irons, and dragged to a frightful prison.

However, every thing was prepared for the celebration of this unhappy marriage. We may justly conclude that the feast was suitable to the character of Mezentius. Wrestling, the cestus, gladiators, combats between men and animals bred up to carnage, every thing that barbarity has invented for its amusements, was to have graced the pomp: nothing was wanting to this bloody spectacle, but persons to fight against the wild beasts; for it was customary to expose to these fights none but criminals condemned to die; and Mezentius, who on any suspicion was always eager to put the innocent to death, retarded still less the punishment of the guilty. There remained in the

prisons none but the faithful friend of Lausus. ‘ Let him be exposed,’ said Mezentius; ‘ let him fall a prey to the devouring lions: the traitor deserves a more cruel death; but this best suits his crime and my vengeance, and his punishment is a feast worthy of injured love.’

Lausus having in vain expected the answer of his friend, impatiently gave way to affright. ‘ Should we be discovered?’ says he; ‘ should I have lost my friend by my fatal imprudence! Lydia herself—Ah! I tremble. No, I cannot live any longer in this dreadful uncertainty.’ He sets out; he disguises himself carefully; he arrives; he hears the report spread among the people; he learns that his friend is in chains, and that the next day is to unite Lydia with Mezentius. He learns that they are preparing the feast which is to precede the marriage festival, and that, by way of shew at this festival, they are to see the unhappy Phanor a prey to wild beasts. He shrinks at this recital; a deadly chillness spreads through all his veins; he comes again to himself; but lost in distraction, he falls on his knees, and cries out, ‘ Great gods, restrain my hand; my despair terrifies me! Let me die to save my friend; but let me die with virtue!’ Resolved to deliver his dear Phanor, though he should perish in his stead, he flies to the gates of the prison; but how is he to enter there? He addresses himself to the slave whose office was to carry food to the prisoners. ‘ Open your eyes,’ said he, ‘ and know me: I am Lausus; I am the son of the king. I expect an important service from you. Phanor is confined here: I will see him: I will. I have but one way to come at him: give me your cloaths; fly! There are the pledges of my acknowledgement; withdraw yourself from the vengeance of my father. If you betray me, you rush on your ruin; if you assist me in my undertaking, my favour shall find you in the very heart of the desarts.’

The weak and timorous slave yields to his promises and threats. He assists the prince in disguising himself,

self, and disappears, after having told him the hour at which he was to present himself, and the conduct he was to observe in order to deceive the vigilance of the guards. Night approaches, the moment arrives, Laufus presents himself: he assumes the name of the slave; the bolts of the dungeon open with a dismal sound. By the feeble glimmering of a torch, he penetrates into this mansion of horror; he advances, he listens: the accents of a moaning voice strike his ear; he knows it to be the voice of his friend; he sees him lying down in the corner of a cell, covered with rags, consumed with weakness, the paleness of death on his countenance, and the fire of despair in his eyes. ‘Leave me,’ said Phanor to him, taking him for the slave; ‘away with these odious nourishments; suffer me to die. Alas!’ added he, sending forth cries interrupted by sighs; ‘alas! my dear Laufus is still more unhappy than I. O, ye gods! if he knows the state to which he has reduced his friend!’—‘Yes,’ cried Laufus, throwing himself on his bosom; ‘yes, my dear Phanor, he does know it, and he partakes of it.’—‘What do I see?’ cried Phanor, transported: ‘Ah, Laufus! ah, my prince?’ At these words both of them lose the use of their senses, their arms are locked in each other, their hearts meet, their sighs are intermingled. They remain for a long time mute and immovable, stretched out on the floor of the dungeon; grief stifles their voice, and they answer each other only by embracing more closely, and bathing one another with their tears. Laufus at last coming to himself, ‘Let us not lose time,’ said he to his friend; ‘take these cloaths, get hence, and leave me here.’—‘What, I! great gods; can I be so vile? Ah, Laufus, could you believe it! Ought you to propose it to me?’—‘I know you well,’ said the prince; ‘but you should also know me. The sentence is pronounced, your punishment is prepared, you must die or fly.’—‘Fly!’—‘Hear me; my father is violent, but he is not without sensibility; Nature asserts her right over his heart: if I deliver you,

death, I have only to melt him to compassion for myself; and his arm, when lifted up against a son, will be easily disarmed.'---' He would strike,' said Phanor, 'and your death would be my crime; I cannot abandon you.'---' Well, then,' said Lausus, 'remain here; but at your death you shall see mine also. Depend not on my father's clemency; it would be in vain for ~~him~~ to pardon me; think not that I pardon myself. This hand, which wrote the fatal billet that condemns you; this hand, which, even after its crime, is still the hand of your friend, shall re-unite us in your own despite.' In vain would Phanor have insisted. 'Let us argue no longer,' interrupted Lausus; 'you can say nothing to me that can equal the shame of surviving my friend, after I have destroyed him. Your pressing earnestness makes me blush, and your prayers are an affront. I will answer for my own safety, if you will fly. I swear to die, if you will stay and perish; chuse: the moments now are precious.'

Phanor knew his friend too well to pretend to shake his resolution. 'I consent,' says he, 'to let you try the only means of safety that is left us; but live, if you would have me live: your scaffold shall be mine.' 'I readily believe it,' said Lausus, 'and your friend esteems you too much to desire you to survive him.' At these words they embraced, and Phanor went out of the dungeon in the habit of the slave, which Lausus had just thrown off.

What a night! what a dreadful night for Lydia; Alas! how shall we paint the emotions that arise in her soul; that divide, that tear it, between love and virtue. She adores Lausus, she detests Mezentius; she sacrifices herself to her father's interests, she delivers herself up to the object of her hatred, she tears herself for ever from the wishes of an adored lover. They lead her to the altar as it were to punishment. Barbarous Mezentius! thou art content to reign over the heart by violence and fear! it suffices thee that thy

consort

consort trembles before thee, as a slave before his master.' Such is love in the heart of a tyrant.

Yet, alas! it is for him alone that she is hereafter to live: it is to him that she is going to be united. If she resists, she must betray her lover and her father: a refusal will discover the secret of her soul; and if Lautus is suspected to be dear to her, he is undone.

It was in this cruel agitation that Lydia waited the day. The terrible day arrives. Lydia, dismayed and trembling, sees herself decked out, not as a bride to be presented at the altars of Love and Hymen, but as one of those innocent victims which a barbarous piety crowned with flowers before it sacrificed them.

They lead her to the place where the spectacle is to be exhibited; the people assemble there in multitudes; the sports begin. I shall not stop to describe the engagements at the cestus, at wrestling, at the sword; a more dreadful object engages our attention.

An enormous lion advances. At first, with a calm pride, he traverses the arena, throwing his dreadful looks around the amphitheatre that environs him: a confused murmur announces the terror that he inspires. In a short time the sound of the clarions animate him; he replies by his roarings; his shaggy mane is erected around his monstrous head; he lashes his loins with his tail, and the fire begins to issue from his sparkling eye-balls. The affrighted populace wish and dread to see the wretch appear, who is to be delivered up to the jaws of this monster. Terror and pity seize on every breast.

A combatant, whom Mezentius's guards themselves had taken for Phanor, presents himself. Lydia could not distinguish him. The horror with which she is seized had obliged her to turn away her eyes from this spectacle, which shocks the sensibility of her tender soul. Alas! what would she feel, if she knew that Phanor, that the dear friend of Lautus, is the criminal whom they have devoted; if she knew that Lautus himself

himself had taken his friend's place, and that it is he who is going to fight !

Half naked, his hair dishevelled, he walks with an intrepid air; a poniard for the attack, a buckler for defence, are the only arms by which he is protected. Mezentius, prepossessed, sees in him only the guilty Phanor. His own blood is dumb, Nature is blind: yet is his own son whom he delivers up to death, and his bowels are not moved; resentment and revenge stifle every other sentiment. He sees with a barbarous joy the fury of the lion rising by degrees. Lausus impatient, provokes the monster, and urges him to the combat. He advances towards him; the lion springs forward. Lausus avoids him. Thrice the enraged animal makes towards him with his foaming jaws, and thrice Lausus escapes his murderous fangs.

In the mean time Phanor learns what is doing. He runs up, and bears down the multitude before him, while his piercing cries make the amphitheatre resound. 'Stop, Mezentius! save your son: it is he; it is Lausus who is engaged.' Mezentius looks and knows Phanor, who hastens towards him: 'O, ye gods, what do I see! My people assist me; throw yourselves on the arena, ravish my son from the jaws of death!' At the name of Lausus, Lydia falls down dead on the steps of the amphitheatre; her heart is chilled, her eyes are covered with darkness. Mezentius sees only his son, who is now in inevitable danger: a thousand hands arm in vain for his defence: the monster pursues him, and would have devoured him, before they could have arrived to his assistance. But, O incredible wonder! O unlooked-for happiness! Lausus, while he eludes the bounds of the furious animal, strikes him a mortal blow; and the sword, with which he is armed, is drawn reeking from the lion's heart. He falls, and swims in seas of blood, vomited through his foaming jaws. The universal alarm now changes into triumph, and the people reply to Mezentius's doleful cries only by shouts of admiration and joy.

These shouts recal Lydia to life; she opens her eyes, and sees Lausus at Mezentius's feet, holding in one hand the bloody dagger, and in the other his dear and faithful Phanor. ‘ It is I,’ said he to his father, ‘ it is I alone who am culpable. Phanor’s crime was mine; it was my duty to expiate it. I forced him to resign his place; and was about to kill myself if he refused. I live, I owe that life to him; and if your son be still dear to you, you owe your son to him; but if your vengeance is not appeased, our days are in your hands: strike; we will perish together; our hearts have sworn it.’ Lydia trembling at this discourse, viewed Mezentius with suppliant eyes, overflowing with tears. The tyrant’s cruelty could not withstand this trial. The cries of nature, and the voice of remorse, put to silence jealousy and revenge. He remains for a long time immovable; and dumb, rolling by turns, on the subjects that surround him, looks of trouble and confusion, in which love, hatred, indignation, and pity, combat and succeed each other. All tremble around the tyrant. Lausus, Phanor, Lydia, a multitude innumerable, wait with terror the first words that he is to pronounce. He submits at last, in spite of himself, to that virtue whose ascendancy overpowers him; and passing of a sudden, with impetuous violence, from rage to tenderness, he throws himself into his son’s arms. ‘ Yes,’ says he, ‘ I pardon thee, and I pardon also thy friend. Live, love one another: but there remains one sacrifice more for me to make thee, and thou hast just now rendered thyself worthy of it. Receive it then,’ said he with a new effort; ‘ receive his hand, the gift of which is dearer to thee than life, it is thy valour which has forced it from me; it is that alone could have obtained it.’

BY GOOD LUCK.

‘**N**O, Madam,’ said the Abbé de Chateauneuf to the old Marchioness of Lisban, ‘I cannot believe that what is called virtue in a woman, is so rare as is said ; and I would lay a wager, without going farther, that you yourself have never been guilty of one indiscretion.’—‘Upon my word, my dear abbé, I could almost say like Agnes, *do not lay*.’—‘Should I lose?’—‘No, you would win ; but by so little—so very little, that to say the truth it is not worth boasting of.’—‘That is to say, your prudence has run some risks.’—‘Alas ! yes : I have seen it more than once on the point of being ship-wrecked. *By good luck* you behold it in port.’—‘Ah, Madam, trust me with the recital of your adventures.’—‘With all my heart. We are arrived at an age wherein we have no longer any thing to dissemble, and my youth is now so long past, that I may speak of it as a gay dream.

‘If you recollect, the Marquis of Lisban, he was one of those insipid fine figures, which say to you, *Here am I !* He was one of those awkward pieces of vanity which always miss their aim. He valued himself on every thing, and was good at nothing : he took the lead in conversation, demanded silence, suspended the attention, and then brought out the flattest speech in the world. He laughed before he told a story, but no one else laughed at his stories ; he often aimed at being refined, and gave such fine turns to what he said, that at last he did not know what he was saying : when he had given ladies the vapours, he thought he had made them pehensive : when they were diverting themselves with his follies, he took it for coquetry.’—‘Ah, Madam, what a happy temper !’—‘Our first interviews were filled with the recital of his intrigues. I began by listening to him with impatience ; I ended by hearing him with disgust : I even took the liberty of declaring to my parents that the creature tired me to death. They replied that I was a simpleton, for that a husband

a husband was formed to do so. I married him. They made me promise to love him alone : my mouth said, *Yes*; my heart said, *No*; and my heart kept its promise. The Count of Palmene presented himself before me with all the graces of mind and figure. My husband, who introduced him, did the honours of my modesty : he replied to the handsome things the count said on his happiness with an air of superiority that made me mad. If you would believe him, I loved him to distraction ; and this declaration was succeeded by all that indiscreet disclosure of secrets, no less shocking to truth than decorum, while vanity abuses the silence of modesty. I was not able to contain myself ; I quitted the room, and Palmene could perceive by my disgust, that the marquis imposed upon him. "The impertinent creature!" said I to myself, "he goes on boasting of his triumphs, because he is persuaded I shall not have the courage to contradict him. They will believe him, they will suppose me tasteless enough to love the silliest and vainest man in the world. If he had spoken of an honest attachment to my duty, I could have borne it ; but to talk of love ! of a weakness for him ! this is enough to bring a disgrace on me. No, I would not have it said in the world, that I am fond of my husband : it is of the highest consequence that I should undeceive Palmene ; and with him I ought to begin."

"My husband, who congratulated himself on having put me out of countenance, did not discover, any better than myself, the true cause of my confusion and anger. He valued himself too much, and loved me too little, to condescend to be jealous. "You have behaved like a child," said he to me when the count was gone : "I can tell you, however, that he thinks you charming. Yet do not listen too much to him ; he is a dangerous man." I felt it much better than he could tell me.

"Next day the Count de Palmene came to see me ; he found me alone. "Do you forgive me, Madam,"

I said

said he, "for the confusion I saw in you yesterday? I was the innocent cause of it, but I could freely have dispensed with the marquis's making me his confidant."----"I know not," said I to him, looking down, "why he takes so much pleasure in relating what it gives me so much pain to hear."----"When we are so happy, Madam, we are very pardonable in being indiscreet."----"If he is happy, I congratulate him; but indeed he has no reason."-

"What! can he be otherwise?" replied the count with a sigh, "when he possesses the most beautiful woman in the world?"----"Suppose, Sir, suppose for once that I am so; where is the glory, the merit, the happiness of possessing me? Did I dispose of myself?"---

"No, Madam; but, if I may believe him, you soon applauded the choice they had made for you."----

"What! Sir! will the men never consider that they train us up to dissimulation from our infancy; that we lose our frankness with our liberty; and that is no longer the time to require of us to be sincere, when they have imposed it as a duty on us to be otherwise?" Here I was a little too much so myself, and perceived it too late: hope had now insinuated itself into the count's soul. To confess that one does not love one's husband, is almost to confess that we love another; and the person who is made the confidant of such a confession, is very often the object of it.

'These ideas had plunged the count into a pleasing reverie. "You have dissembled then mighty well," said he, after a long silence, "for the marquis has told me astonishing things of your mutual love."--

"Very well, Sir; let himself flatter him as much as he pleases: I shall not try to undeceive him."--"But for yourself, Madam, ought you to be unhappy?"-----

"I do my duty, I submit to my destiny: question me no more about it; and, above all, make no ill use of the secrets which the imprudence of my husband, my own natural sincerity, and my impatience have forced from me."--"I! Madam; may I die sooner than be

unworthy

unworthy your confidence. But I would enjoy it alone, and without reserve: look upon me as a friend who shares all your disquiets, and in whose breast you may safely deposit them."

" This name of *friend* infused into my heart a perfidious tranquillity: I no longer mistrusted either myself or him. A friend of twenty-four hours, of the count's age and figure, appeared to me the most reasonable, as well as the most decent thing in the world; and a husband, such as mine, the thing of all the world the most ridiculous and most afflicting.

" The latter obtained no longer, from the duty I owed him, any more than a few cold civilities; of which, however, he had still the folly to pride himself, and was always mentioning them in confidence to Palmene, and at the same exaggerating their value. The count knew not what to think of it. " Why deceive me?" said he sometimes. " Why disown a commendable sensibility? Are you ashamed to contradict yourself?"----" Alas! no, Sir; I could glory in it; but I am not happy enough to have occasion to retract."

" At these words my eyes were filled with tears. Palmene was melted by them. What did he not say to me to soften my sorrows! What pleasure did I take in hearing him! O, my dear abbé! the dangerous comforter: he assumed from that moment an absolute empire over my soul; and, of all my thoughts, my love for him was the only one I concealed from him. He had never spoke to me of his own passion but under the title of friendship; but making an ill use at last of the ascendancy he had over me, he writ to me as follows:

" I have deceived myself, and imposed upon you; that friendship, so calm and so sweet, to which I resigned myself without fear, is become love, the most violent, the most passionate, that ever existed. I shall see you this evening, to devote my life to you, or to bid you an eternal farewell.

‘ I shall not explain to you, my dear abbé, the different emotions that arose in my soul: all I know is, that virtue, love, and fear, strove there together; but I remember, too, that joy had its part. I endeavoured, however, to prepare myself for making a good defence. First, I thought I would not be alone---“ and I will go and tell them to let in all the world.” Secondly, I resolved I would look at him but very slightly, without giving his eyes an opportunity to fix themselves for one moment on mine. “ This effort will cost me dear; but virtue is not virtue for nothing. In short I will avoid giving him an opportunity of speaking to me in particular: and, if he should dare to attempt it; I will answer him in a tone, in such a tone as shall deceive him.”

My resolution being taken, I sat down to my toilette; and without intending it, dressed myself that day with more grace and elegance than ever. In the evening, a prodigious deal of company came to see me, and this company put me out of humour. My husband also, more carhest and assiduous than usual, as if he had done it on purpose, harrassed me almost to death. At length they announced Palmene. He blushed, he paid his respects to me: I received him with a profound curtsey, without deigning to raise my eyes towards him, and said to myself, “ Well, this is very fine!” The conversation at first was general: Palmene let drop some words, which, to the rest of the company, carried very little meaning, but signified a great deal to me. I pretended not to understand them, and applauded myself in my own mind for so well supported a rigour. Palmene had not the courage to approach me; my husband forced him to it by his familiar pleasantries. The count’s respect and timidity softened me. “ The poor wretch,” said I, “ is more to be pitied than blamed; if he dared, he would ask pardon of me; but he will never have the courage. I will cheer him by a look.”---“ I have been guilty of indiscretion, Madam,” said he to me, “ do you pardon

pardon me for it?"---"No, Sir." This *No*, pronounced I know not how, appeared to me very great. Palmene got up, as it were to go: my husband retained him by force. Word was brought that supper was on table. "Come, my dear count, be gallant; give my wife your hand: she seems to me to be rather in ill-humour; but we shall contrive to drive it away."

"Palmene in despair, squeezed my hand; I looked at him, and thought I saw in his eyes the image of love and grief. I was touched with it, my dear abbé; and by a movement, which proceeded from my heart, my hand replied to his. I cannot describe to you the change which appeared all of a sudden on his countenance. It sparkled with joy, and that joy diffused itself into the souls of all the company. Love, and the desire of pleasing, seemed to animate them all, as well himself.

The discourse turned upon gallantry. My husband, who thought himself an Ovid in the art of love, delivered a thousand impertinencies on the subject. The count, in his answers, endeavoured to soften them with a delicacy and ingenuity that quite charmed me. *By good luck*, a young fop, who had seated himself by me, took it into his head to say handsome things to me. *By good luck* also I paid some attention to him, and answered him with an air of satisfaction. The amiable Palmene now changed of a sudden both his language and temper. The conversation had passed from love to coquetry. The count inveighed against that general desire of pleasing, with a warmth and gravity that astonished me. "I forgive," said he, "a woman for changing her lover; I can even pardon her for having several; all this is natural; it is not her fault if they cannot fix her; at least, if she seeks to captivate only those she loves, and whom she makes happy; and if she contributes at one time to the happiness of two or three, it is only a blessing multiplied. But a coquette is a tyrant who wants to enslave, merely for the pleasure of having slaves. Idolatress of herself, she cares for no

body else : her pride makes a sport of our weakness, and a triumph of our torments ; her looks are false, her mouth deceitful, her language and her behaviour are only a series of snares, her graces so many syrens, her charms so many poisons."

" This declamation astonished all present. " What ! Sir," said the young gentleman to him, who had talk'd to me, do you prefer a woman of gallantry to a coquette!"---" Yes, without doubt do I, and it is beyond all dispute."---" Such a one is more convenient !" said I to him ironically. " And more estimable, Madam," replied he, with an air of chagrin ; " more estimable a thousand times." I confess that I was piqued at this insult. " Come, Sir," replied I with disdain, it is to no purpose that you reproach us, as with a crime, of one of the most innocent and most natural pleasures in the world ; your opinion will not be a law. The coquettes, you say, are tyrants : you are a much greater tyrant yourself, for wanting to deprive us of the only advantage that nature has given us. If we must give up the desire of pleasing, what have we left in society ? Talents, genius, the striking virtues, all these you have, or think you have ; it is permitted a woman only to attempt to be amiable ; and yet you most cruelly condemn her never to wish to be so, except to one man. This is to bury her alive amidst the living ; this is to render the whole world nothing to her."---" Ah, Madam !" said the count to me in a pet, " you are in the way of the world ! Indeed I could not have believed it."---" You are wrong, my dear," replied my husband, " you are wrong : my wife would please every body, but desires to make none happy but me. That is cruel, I confess, and I have told her so a hundred times ; but it is her foible : so much the worse for the dupes. Besides, why take so seriously what is but a jest ? If she takes a pleasure in hearing herself called handsome, must she for that reason reply in the same strain ? She loves me, that is plain ; but you, and as many others as amuse her, ye have no pretensions

pretensions to her heart. She keeps that for me ; and I defy any body to rob me of it."—" You shut my mouth," said Palmene, " the moment you cite your lady for an example, and I have nothing to say in reply." At these words they went out from table.

" I conceived from that instant, I will not say an aversion for the count, but a dread which almost comes up to it. " What a strange man!" said I to myself! " what an imperious disposition ! He would make a woman miserable." After supper he fell into a sullen silence, from which nothing could rouse him. At last, finding me for a moment alone, " Do you really think as you spoke?" demanded he with the air of a severe judge. " Certainly."—" Enough : you shall never see me more as long as I live."

" By good luck he kept his word with me, and I perceived by the chagrin which this rupture gave me, all the danger I had run."—" See," said the abbé, moralizing very gravely, " what one moment of ill-humour produces. A trifle becomes a serious affair : we are exasperated, humbled ; love is terrified, and flies."

" The character of the Chevalier de Luzel, ruined the marchioness, " was quite the reverse of that of the Count de Palmene."—" This gentleman, madam, was, without doubt, the person who was so sweet upon you at supper ?"—" Yes, my dear abbé, the same. He was beautiful as Narcissus, and he loved himself no less : he had vivacity, and a gentility in his understanding, but not the shadow of common sense.

" Ah ! marchioness," said he to me, " this Palmene of yours is a melancholy creature ! What do you do with the man ? He talks, he moralizes, he overwhelms us with his arguments. For my own part, I know but two things ; to amuse myself, and to be amusing to others : I know the world I live in, I see what passes there ; I see that the greatest of evils that afflict mankind is dullness. Now this dullness proceeds from an evenness in the temper, a constancy in our connec-
• tions,

tions, a solidity in our tastes, a monotony, in short, which gives a sleepiness even to pleasure itself; while levity, caprice, coquetry, keep it awake. Besides, I love coquettes to distraction: coquetry is the charm of society. Besides, sensible women are tiresome in the long-run. It is a good thing to have somebody with whom you may unbend."—"With me," said I to him, smiling, "you may unbend as much as you please."—"And that now is what I want, what I seek in a coquette; to oppose, to resist, to defend herself, if possible. Yes, Madam, I would try you, if I thought you capable of a serious attachment."—"Madam," replied the abbé gravely, "this young fop was a dangerous person."—"I assure you, my good friend, he was; and I was not long before I perceived it. I treated him at first as a child, and this ascendancy of my understanding over his could not but be very flattering at my time of life, but he might be taken from me by somebody. I began to grow uneasy at it. His absence put me out of humour; his connections raised my jealousy. I demanded sacrifices, and wanted to impose laws.

"Well now," said he to me one day when I was reproaching him for his dissipation, "would you work a little miracle; make me discreet at once: I ask nothing better." I understood very well, that to make him discreet, there was a necessity for ceasing to be so myself. I asked him, however, on what this little miracle depended. "On a trifle," said he: "we seem to me to love one another already; the rest is easily imagined."—"If we loved one another, as you say, but which I do not believe, the miracle would be already performed: love alone would have rendered you discreet."—"O, no, Madam, we must be just: I willingly abandon all other hearts for yours, win or lose; it is the chance or the game, and I wish to run the hazard of it; but yet there is an exchange to make, and you cannot in conscience desire that I should renounce all pleasure for nothing."—"Madam, interrupted

rupted the abbé, ‘ the chevalier was not so void of sense as you say, and here he reasoned pretty well.—‘ I was astonished,’ said the marchioness; ‘ but the more I perceived he was in the right, the more I endeavoured to persuade him that he was wrong. I even told him, as far as I can remember, some of the finest things in the world on honour, duty, and conjugal fidelity: but he paid no regard to them; he pretended that honour was only a decorum, marriage a ceremony, and the oath of fidelity a compliment, a piece of politeness, which in reality bound us to nothing. So much was said on one side and the other, that we began to lose ourselves in our ideas, when on a sudden my husband arrived.’

‘ *By good luck, Madam!*’—‘ Oh! by great good luck, I confess: never did husband come more opportunely. We were confused; my blushes would have betrayed me; and, for want of time to recollect myself, I said to the chevalier, “ Hide yourself.” He retired into the closet of my dressing-room.’—‘ A dangerous retreat, Madam!’—‘ It was so; but this closet had a back-door, and I was easy about the chevalier’s escape.’—‘ Madam,’ said the abbé, with his air of reflection, ‘ I would lay a wager that the chevalier is still in the closet.’—‘ Patience,’ replied the marchioness, ‘ we are not come to the unravelling of the plot. My husband accosted me with that air of self-content which appeared always on his countenance; and I, in order to conceal my embarrassment from him, ran up hastily to embrace him with an exclamation of surprise and joy.’—“ So, you little fool,” said he to me, “ there now, I suppose you are pleased! You see me again. I am very good, to come and pass the evening with this poor thing. You are not ashamed, then, to love your husband? But do you know that it is ridiculous, and that they say that they must bury us together, or that I must be banished from you; that you are good for nothing, ever since you have been my wife; that you drive all your lovers into despair, and that you ought to be punished

nished for it?"—"I, Sir! I drive nobody into despair. Do not you know me; I am one of the best-natured women in the world."—"What an air of simplicity! one would believe it. Thus, for example, Palmene ought to take it for granted that you have not played the coquette with him: the chevalier ought to be content that you prefer your husband to him; and what a husband too! A dull insipid fellow, who has not even common sense: is it not so? What a contrast to an elegant chevalier!"—"Indeed I form no comparison between you."—"The chevalier has wit, vivacity, and grace. How do I know but he has the gift of tears also? Has he never wept at your knees? You blush! That is almost a confession. Out with it; tell me?"—"Have done," said I to him, "or I will leave the room."—"What! do not you see that I am joking?"—"Such joking would deserve—" "How now! what, angry! You threaten me too! You may, but I shall not be at all alarmed."—"You take advantage of my virtue."—"Of your virtue? Oh, not at all! I depend only on my own planet, which will not suffer me to be made a fool of!"—"And you trust to your planet?"—"I trust so strongly in it, I depend so thoroughly upon it, that I defy you to counteract it. Haik ye, child, I have known women without number; and not one, whateve. I did, could bring herself to be untrue to me. Ah I may say without vanity, that when they love me, they love me heartily. Not that I am better than any other: I do not flatter myself so far as that; but there is a certain *je-ne-sai-quoi*, as Moliere says, which cannot be explained." At these words, surveying himself with his eyes, he walked before a glais. "You see too," continued he, "how little restraint I put upon you. For example, to-night have you any appointment, any *tête-à-tête*, I take my leave. It is merely on a supposition that you are disengaged, that I come to pass the evening with you."—"However that be," said I to him, "you had better stay."—"For the

greater

greater surety, is it not so?"—"Perhaps so."—"I thank you: I see I must sup with you."—"Sup then quickly," interrupted the abbé; "the marquis makes me impatient: I am in pain till you get up from table; till you are retired into your own apartment, and your husband leaves you there."—"Well, my dear abbé, behold me there, in the most cruel anxiety I ever experienced in my life. My soul struggling (I blush at it yet) between fear and desire. I advance with a trembling pace towards the cloét of my dressing-room, to see at last if my fears have any foundation: I perceive nobody there, I think him gone, this perfidious chevalier! but by *good luck*, I hear somebody speaking in a low voice in the next room; I draw near, I listen: it was Luzel himself, with the youngest of my women. "It *is* true," said he, "I came here with a design upon the marchioness, but chance uses me better than love. What a comparison! and how unjust is fortune! Your mistress is well enough; but has she that shape, that air of neatness, that bloom, that gentility? You are, by nature, a woman of quality. A woman must either be very modest, or very vain, to have an attendant of your age and figure! Faith, Lucy, if the Graces are made like you, Venus cannot shine much at her toilette."—"Keep your gallantries, Sir, for my lady; and remember that she will be here presently."—"Oh, no, she is with her husband; they are the best in the world together. I even think, God forgive me! that I hear them saying tender things to each other. It would be pleasant if he should come to pass the night with her. But however that be, she does not know that I am here, and from this moment, I am no longer for her."—"But, Sir, you do not consider; what will become of me if they should know it?"—"Take courage; I have provided for every thing: if to-morrow they should see me go out, it is easy to give it a proper turn."—"But, Sir, my lady's honour—" "Stuff: your lady's honour is mightily concerned in it! And after all, if they should give her such a man

as myself, so much the better, that would bring her into fashion."—"Oh, the wretch!" cried the abbé. "Judge my friend," resumed the marchioness, "my indignation at this discourse. I was on the point of bursting out upon them; but such a burst of passion would have ruined me: neither my people nor my husband would have been able to persuade themselves that the chevalier came there on Lucy's account. I resolved to dissemble: I rang; Lucy appeared; I had never seen her look so handsome before; for jealousy embellishes its object, when it cannot make it ugly. "Was that one of your master's servants," said I to her, "whom I just now heard talking with you?"—"Yes, Madam," replied she with confusion. "Let him withdraw this instant, and do not come back till he is gone." I said no more; but whether Lucy saw through me, or fear determined her to send away the chevalier, he retired that instant, and got out undiscovered. You may easily judge, my dear abbé, that my door was ever after shut against him; and that Lucy the next day dressed my head ill, did every thing wrong, was good for nothing, put me quite out of patience, and was discharged."

"You had reason, Madam," cried the abbé, "to say that your virtue has run some risks."—"This is not all," continued she, "I shall now entertain you with another adventure. We passed the summer every year at our country-house at Corbéil, where we had a celebrated painter for our neighbour, which inspired the marquis with the gallant notion of having my portrait and his own. You know that it was his foible to believe himself beloved by me. He would have us represented in the same piece, chained together by Hymen with wreaths of flowers. The painter took the hint; but being accustomed to draw after nature, he desired to have a model for the figure of Hymen. In the same village was at that time a young abbé, who now and then came to see us. His fine eyes, his rosy mouth, his complexion scarce yet shaded with the down

down of youth, his hair of a bright flaxen colour flowing in small ringlets on a neck whiter than ivory, the tender vivacity of his looks, the delicacy and regularity of his features, every thing about him seemed so formed for the purpose, that the marquis prevailed on the abbé to consent to serve as a model to the painter.'

'At this beginning, the Abbé de Chateauneuf redoubled his attention; but contained himself till the end, in order to hear the conclusion of the story.

'The expression to be given to the countenances,' continued the marchioness, 'produced excellent scenes between the painter and the marquis. The more my husband endeavoured to put on an air of sensibility, the more simple he looked. The painter copied faithfully, and the marquis was enaged at seeing himself painted to the life. For my part, I had something of mockery in my countenance, which the painter imitated as well. The marquis swore, the artist retouched without ceasing; but he still found on the canvas the air of a fly baggage and a fool. At last a dullness seized me; the marquis took it for a soft languor; on his side he gave himself a foolish laugh, which he called a tender smile, and the painter came off for drawing him as he saw him. We were to proceed next to the figure of Hymen. "Come, Sir," said the painter to the abbé, "now for the Graces and voluptuousness! Look tenderly on the lady; still more tenderly."...."Take her hand," added my husband, "and imagine that you are saying to her, Fear not, my dear; these bands are made of flowers; strong, but light. Animate yourself, then, my dear abbé; your countenance has no expression in it: you have the air of a Hymen benumbed." The young man profited wonderfully by the instructions of the painter and the marquis. His timidity vanished by degrees, his mouth wore an amorous smile, his complexion was heightened with a livelier red, his eyes sparkled with a gentler flame, and his hand pressed mine with a tremor which myself only could perceive. I must tell you all, the emotion of his soul passed into mine,

and I viewed the god with much more tenderness than I had done my spouse. "There! the very thing," said the marquis: "go on, abbé; admirable---Is not it?" said he to the painter. "We shall make something of this little model.----Come, wife, do not let us be cast down: I knew very well that it would be a fine piece. There! you are now just as I wanted.----Courage, abbé.----Go on, Madam: I leave you both in the right attitude; do not change it till I return." As soon as the marquis was gone, my little abbé became quite heavenly; my eyes devoured his, and yet I could not be satisfied. The sittings were long, and seemed to us to last only for a moment. "What a pity!" said the painter, "that I did not take my lady at such a juncture as this! There is the expression I wished for! quite another countenance. Ah, Sir! what a pleasure it is to copy you? You do not flag at all: your features become more and more animated.----No inattention, Madam; fix your eyes on his: my Hymen will be a capital figure." When the head of the Hymen was finished, "I want, Madam," said he to me one day in my husband's absence, "I want to retouch your portrait. Change places abbé, and take that of the marquis."--"Why so, Sir?" said I, blushing. "Oh, Heavens, Madam! let me alone. I know best what will set you off to advantage." I understood him, and the abbé blushed at it as well as myself. The artifice of the painter had a wonderful effect. The languor gave place to the most touching expression of timid voluptuousness. The marquis, at his return, could not cease admiring this change, which he could not comprehend. "This is very strange!" said he; it looks as if the picture had animated itself."----"It is the effect of my colours," replied the painter, coldly, "to display themselves thus in proportion as they take place. You will see it quite a different thing in a short time from what it is now!"--"But my head," resumed the marquis, to me does not seem to improve so."----"That is easily accounted for," replied the artist:

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"the

"the lineaments are stronger, and the colours less delicate. But do not be impatient: it will become, in time, one of the finest husband's heads that ever was seen."

"When the picture was finished, the abbé and myself fell into a profound melancholy. Those soft moments in which our souls spoke through our eyes, and shot themselves into one another, were now no more. His timidity and my modesty laid us under a cruel restraint. He no longer dared to visit us so often, and I no longer dared to invite him.

"In short, one day, when he happened to be at our house, I found him alone motionless and pensive, before the picture. "You are well employed, Sir," said I to him"—"Yes, Madam," replied he briskly, "I am enjoying the only pleasure that will henceforth be permitted me: I am admiring yourself in your picture."—"You are admiring me! That is very gallant!"—"Ah! I would say more if I durst."—"Indeed? You are content?"—"Content, Madam! I am enchanted. Alas! why are you not still such as I see you in this picture!"—"It is pretty well," interrupted I, pretending not to understand him, "But yours appears to me to be better."—"Better, Madam, mine is as cold as ice."—"You joke about your coldness; nothing in the world can be more warm."—"Ah, Madam! had I but been at liberty to suffer that emotion to display itself in my countenance, which passed in my heart, you should have seen quite another thing. But how could I express what I felt in those moments? The painter, if not the marquis, had his eyes continually upon me. I was obliged to assume a tranquil air. Would you see," added he, "how I should have viewed you, if we had been without witnesses? Give me once more that hand which I pressed not without trembling, and let us resume the same attitude."—"Would you believe it, my friend, I had the curiosity, the complaisance, and if you please, the weakness, to let my hand drop into his. I must confess, I never saw any thing so tender, so pas-

sionate, so touching as the figure of my little abbé, at this dangerous conference. Voluptuousness smiled on his lips, desire sparkled in his eyes, and all the flowers of the spring seemed to blow on his beautiful cheeks. He pressed my hand against his heart, and I felt it beat with a vivacity that communicated itself to mine."—"Yes," said I, endeavouring to dissemble my confusion, "that would be more expressive, I confess, but it would no longer be the figure of Hymen."—"No Madam, no; it would be that of Love: but Hymen at your feet ought to be no other than Love himself." At these words he seemed to forget himself, and thought himself in reality the god whose image he represented.

"*By good luck* I had still strength enough left to be in a passion: the poor creature, shocked and confounded, took my emotion for anger, and lost, in asking my pardon, the most favourable moment to offend me with impunity."—"Ah, Madam!" cried the Abbé de Chateauneuf, "is it possible that I have been such a fool!"—"How now?" resumed the Marchioness. "Alas! this little fool was I!"—"You! impossible!"—"It was I, I myself, nothing more certain. You recall my own story to my remembrance. Cruel woman! had I known but what I know now!"—"My old friend, you would have had too great an advantage; and this prudence which you now extol so highly would have made but a feeble resistance."—"I am confounded" cried the abbé, "I shall never forgive myself as long as I live."—"Console yourself, for it is time," replied the marchioness, smiling; "but confess that there is a great deal of *good luck* in virtue itself, and that those ladies who have the most, ought to judge less severely of them who have not had enough."

THE TWO UNFORTUNATE LADIES.

IN the convent of the visitation of Cl.... had for some short time retired the Marchioness of Clarence. The calm and serenity which she saw reign in this solitude, did but render more lively and bitter the grief that

that consumed her. ‘ How happy,’ said she, ‘ are those innocent doves, which have taken their flight towards heaven ! Life is to them a cloudless day ; they know neither the sorrows nor pleasures of the world.’

Amidst these pious maidens, whose happiness she envied, one only, named Lucilia, seemed to her to be penitive and pining. Lucilia, still in the bloom of her youth, had that style of beauty which is the image of a sensible heart ; but sorrow and tears had taken off its freshness, like a rose which the sun has withered, but which leaves us still capable of judging, in its languishing state, of all the beauty it had in the morning. There seems to be a dumb language between tender souls. The marchioness read in the eyes of this afflicted fair-one what nobody had discovered there before. So natural is it to the unhappy to complain, and love their partners in affliction ! She took a liking to Lucilia. Friendship, which in the world is hardly a sentiment, in the cloister is a passion. Their connection in a short time became very intimate, but on both sides a concealed sorrow poisoned its sweetness. They were sometimes a whole hour sighing together, without presuming to ask each other the secret of their griefs. The marchioness at last broke the silence.

‘ A mutual confession,’ said she, ‘ would spare us perhaps a great deal of uneasiness : we stifle our sighs on both sides ; ought friendship to keep any thing a secret from the breast where a mutual friendship is found ?’ At these words a modest blush animated the features of Lucilia ; and the veil of her eye-lids dropped over her fine eyes. ‘ Ah ! why,’ replied the Marchioness, ‘ why this blush ? Is it the effect of shame ? Is it thus that the thought of happiness ought to colour beauty. Speak my Lucilia, pour out your heart into the bosom of a friend more, without doubt, to be lamented than you felt, but who would console herself for her own happiness, if she could but soften yours.’ — ‘ What is it you ask of me, Madam, I share all your sorrows, but I have none of my own to confide to you. The alteration of my health

is the only cause of that languor into which you see me plunged. I am decaying insensibly; and, thanks to Heaven, my end approaches.' She spoke these last words with a smile, at which the marchioness was greatly affected. 'Is that, then,' said she, 'your only consolation? yet, though impatient to die, you will not confess to me what it is that renders life odious to you. How long have you been here?'—'Five years, Madam.'—'Was you brought hither by compulsion?'—'No, Madam, by reason, by Heaven, which was pleased to attract my heart entirely to itself.'—'That heart, then, was attached to the world?'—'Alas! yes, for its own punishment.'—'Finish.'—'I have told you all.'—'Were you in love Lucilia, and had the fortitude to bury yourself alive? Was it some perfidious wretch whom you have abandoned?'—'The most virtuous, most tender, and most valuable of mankind. Ask no more: you see the guilty tears that steal from my eyes; all the wounds of my heart open afresh at the thought.'—'No, my dear Lucilia, it is not a time for us now to keep any thing a secret. I would penetrate into the inmost recesses of your heart, in order to pour consolation into it: believe me, the poison of grief exhales not but by complaints; shut up in silence, it only becomes the more violent.'—'You will have it, Madam? Weep then over the unfortunate Lucilia; weep over her life, and shortly over her death.'

'Scarce had I appeared in the world, when this fatal beauty attracted the eyes of a fickle and imprudent youth, whose homage could not dazzle me. One man alone, yet in the age of innocence and candour, taught me that I was sensible of love. The equality of our years, birth, fortune; the connection also between our families; and above all, a mutual inclination had united us to each other. My lover lived only for me: he saw with pity this immense void of the world, where pleasure is only a shadow, where love is but a gleam; our hearts full of themselves But I lose myself. Ah, Madam, what do you now oblige me to call to

to mind'----' What, my dear, do you reproach yourself for having been just? When Heaven has formed two virtuous and sensible hearts, does it make it criminal in them to seek each other, to attract, to captivate reciprocally? It so, why has it made them?'----' It formed, no doubt, with pleasure that heart in which mine lost itself; where virtue took place of reason, and where I saw nothing that was a reproach to nature. Oh, Madam, who was ever loved like me! Would you believe that I was obliged to spare my lover's delicacy even the confession of those tender quietudes which sometimes afflict love? He would have deprived himself of life, if Lucilia had been jealous of it. When he perceived in my eyes any mark of sorrow, it was to him as if all nature had been eclipsed: he supposed himself always the cause, and reproached himself for all my faults.

' It is but too easy to judge to what excess the most amiable of men must have been loved. Interest, which dissolves all ties except those of love, interest disunited our families: a fatal law-suit, commenced against my mother, was to us the *ara* and source of our misfortunes. The mutual hatred of our friends raised itself as an eternal barrier between us: we were obliged to give over seeing each other. The letter which he wrote to me will never be effaced out of my memory.

" Every thing is lost to me, my dear Lucilia: they tear from me my only happiness. I am just come from throwing myself at my father's feet, I am just come from conjuring him, bathing him at the same time with my tears, to give over this fatal law-suit. He received me as a child. I protested to him that your fortune was sacred to me, that my own would become odious. He has treated my disinterestedness as a folly. Mankind conceive not that there is something above riches: and yet what should I do with wealth if I lose you? They say that one day I shall be glad they did not listen to me. If I believed that age, or what they call reason, could so far debate my soul, I should cease to live from this

this moment, terrified at what was to come. No, my dear Lucilia, no; all I have or ask is yours. The laws would in vain give me a part of your inheritance; my laws are in my heart, and my father there stands condemned. A thousand pardons for the uneasinesses he occasions you! Pray God that I offer up no criminal wishes; I could cut off from my own days to add to my father's; but, if ever I am master of those riches he is now accumulating, and with which he would overload me in spite of myself, ample reparation shall be made for all. But yet I am deprived of you.' They will dispose, perhaps, of the heart which you have given me. Ah! beware of ever consenting to it: think that my life is at stake, think that our oaths are written in heaven. But can you withstand the imperious will of a mother? I shudder at the thought; speak comfort to me, in the name of the most tender love."

" You answered him, without doubt." " Yes, Madam; but in a very few words.

" I upbraid you with nothing. I am unhappy, but I know how to be so: learn from me to suffer."

" The law-suit, however, was begun, and carried on with heat. One day, alas! one terrible day; while my mother was reading with indignation a memorial published against her, somebody asked to speak with me. " Who is it?" said she; " let them come in." The servant, confounded, hesitates for some time, stammers in his answers, and concludes by confessing that he was charged with a billet to me. " For my daughter! from whom?" I was present; judge of my situation; judge of the indignation of my mother when she heard the name of the son of the person whom she called her persecutor. If she had vouchsafed to read the billet, which she sent back without opening, perhaps she had been moved by it. She would have seen, at least, the extreme purity of our sentiments: but whether the vexation into which this law-suit had plunged her, required only an opportunity to vent itself, or that a secret correspondence between her daughter

ter and her enemies was in her eyes a real crime, there are no reproaches with which I was not loaded. I fell down confounded at my mother's feet, and submitted to the humiliation of her upbraiding, as if I had deserved them. It was determined on the spot that I should go and conceal in a cloister what she called my shame and her own. Being brought here the day after, orders were given not to suffer me to see any body; and I was here three whole months, as if my family and the world had been entirely annihilated to me. The first and only visit I received was my mother's: I prefigured from her embraces the sentence she was going to pronounce. "I am ruined," said she to me, as soon we were alone: iniquity has prevailed; "I have lost my law-suit, and with it all means of establishing you in the world. Scarce enough remains for my son to support himself according to his birth. As to you, my daughter, God has called you here; here you must live and die: to-morrow you take the veil." At these words, which were strengthened by the cold and absolute tone in which they were pronounced, my heart was struck, and my tongue frozen; my knees gave way beneath me, and I fell senseless on the ground. My mother called for assistance, and laid hold of that opportunity to withdraw herself from my tears. When I was come to myself again, I found myself surrounded with those pious damsels, whose companion I was to be, and who invited me to partake with them the sweet tranquility of their condition. But that state, so fortunate for an innocent and disengaged soul, presented to my eyes nothing but struggles, perjuries, and remorse. A dreadful abyss was going to be opened betwixt my lover and me; I found my better part torn from me; I saw no longer any thing around me but silence and vacuity; and in this immense solitude, in this renunciation of all nature, I found myself in the presence of Heaven, with my heart full of the lovely object, which it was necessary I should forget for its sake. These holy damsels told me, with the strongest conviction,

conviction, all that they knew of the vanities of the world : but it was not to the world that I was attached ; the most horrible desert would have seemed a ravishing abode with the man whom I had left in that world which to me was nothing.

" I desired to see my mother again : she pretended at first to have taken my swooning for a natural accident. " No, Madam, it is the effect of the violent situation into which you have thrown me ; for it is no longer time to feign. You have given me life, you may take it from me ; but, Madam, have you conceived me only as a victim devoted to the torment of a lingering death ? and to whom is it you sacrifice me ? Not to God. I feel that he rejects me : the Almighty demands only pure victims, voluntary sacrifices ; he is jealous of the offerings made him, and the heart which presents itself to him ought thenceforward to be his alone. If violence drags me to the altar, perjury and sacrilege attend me there." --- " What say you, wretched girl ? " --- " A terrible truth, which despair forces from me. Yes, Madam, my heart has given itself away without your consent ; innocent or culpable, it is no longer mine ; God only can break the band by which it is tied." --- " Go, unworthy daughter, go and ruin yourself : I will never acknowledge you more." --- " Dear mother, by your own blood, abandon me not ; see my tears, my despair ; see hell open at my feet ! " --- " Is it in this light, then, that a fatal passion makes thee view the asylum of honour, the tranquil port of innocence ? What, is there then but the world in thy eyes ? Know, however, that this world has but one idol, interest. All our homages are for the successful : oblivion, desertion, and contempt, are the portion of the unfortunate."

" Ah, Madam ! separate from that corrupt multitude the man---" " Whom you love, is it not so ? I know all that he can have said to you. He is no accomplice in the iniquity of his father ; he disclaims it, he complains to you of it ; he will repair the injury done you ! Vain promises ; the fine speeches of a young man, which will

will be forgot to-morrow. But were he constant in his passion, and faithful in his promises, his father is young, he will grow old, for the wicked grow old; and in the mean time love becomes extinct, ambition prompts, duty commands; rank, alliance, fortune, present themselves to him, and the credulous, beguiled maid, becomes the public talk. Such is the lot that awaited you: your mother has preserved you from it. I now cost you some tears, but you will one day bless me for it. I leave you, my daughter: prepare yourself for the sacrifice which God requires of you. The more painful this sacrifice, the more worthy will it be of Him."

' In a word, Madam, I was obliged to resolve. I took this veil this bandage; I entered the path of penitence; and, during the time of probation, in which we are yet free, I flattered myself with the hopes of subduing myself, and attributed my irresolution and weakness solely to the fatal liberty of having it in my power to return. I thought the time long till I could bind myself by an irrevocable oath. I took that oath; I renounced the world; an easy matter. But, alas; I renounced also my lover, and that was more than renouncing my life. On pronouncing those vows, my soul fluttered on my lips, as if ready to leave me. Scarce had I strength enough to drag me to the foot of the altar; whence they were obliged to carry me away as dead. My mother came to me transported with a cruel joy.—Pardon me, my God: I respect, I love her still; I will love her to my last gasp.' These words of Lucilia were interrupted by sighs, and two rivulets of tears overflowed her face.

' The sacrifice was now compleated,' resumed she after a long silence: ' I was the Almighty's, I was no longer my own. All sensual ties were now to be broken: I was become dead to the earth; I presumed to believe it. But what was my terror, on searching into the abyss of my own soul! I there still found love, but a frantic and criminal love; love covered with

shame

shame and despair ; love rebelling against Heaven, against nature, against myself ; love consumed by regret, torn with remorse, and transformed into rage. "What have I done!" cried I to myself a thousand times ; "what have I done! This adored man, whom I must see no more, presents himself to my imagination in all his charms." The happy knot which was to have made us one, all the moments of a delicious life, all the emotions of two hearts which death alone would have separated, presented themselves to my distracted soul. Ah, Madam, how grievous was the image! There is nothing which I have not done in order to blot it from my memory. For these five years past have I by turns banished it from my sight, and seen it recur without ceasing. In vain do I sink myself in sleep, which only revives it in my mind ; in vain do I abstract myself in solitude, where it awaits me : I find it at the foot of the altar, I bear it into the bosom of God himself. Meantime that God, who is the father of mercies, has at length taken pity on me. Time, reason, penance, have weakened the first shocks of this criminal passion, but a painful languor has succeeded. I feel myself dying every moment, and the thought that I am drawing near to my grave is my sole consolation.'

"Oh, my dear Lucilia!" cried the marchioness, after hearing her, "which of us is most to be pitied! Love has been the cause both of your misfortunes and mine : but you loved the tenderest, the most faithful, the most grateful of men ; and I the most perfidious, the most ungrateful, the most cruel. You devoted yourself to Heaven, I delivered up myself to a villain ; your retreat was a triumph, mine is a reproach : people lament you, love you, and respect you ; but me they revile and traduce."

"Of all lovers, the most passionate before marriage was the Marquis of Clarence. Young, amiable, seducing to the highest degree, he promised a most happy disposition. He seemed to possess all the virtues, as he really did all the graces. The docile ease of his

temper

temper received in so lively a manner the impression of virtuous sentiments, that they seemed as if they could never have been effaced. It was too easy for him, alas ! to inspire me with the passion which he had himself, or at least thought he had for me. All the conveniences, which make great matches, conspired with this mutual inclination ; and my parents, who had seen it rising in my bosom, consented to crown it. Two years passed in the tenderest union. O, Paris ! O theatre of vices ! O dreadful rock of love, innocence, and virtue ! My husband, who till then had been but little conversant with those of his own age, and that merely to amuse himself, as he said, with their irregularities and follies, imbibed insensibly the poison of their example. The noisy preparation for their insipid meetings, the mysterious confidence of their adventures, the proud recitals of their empty pleasures, the commendations lavished on their worthless conquests, all excited his curiosity. The sweetnets of an innocent and peaceful union had no longer the same charms for him. I had myself no other talents than those which a virtuous education bestows ; I perceived that he required more in me. "I am undone," said I to myself, "my heart is no longer a sufficient return for his." Indeed his attentions from that time were nothing more than complaisance ; he no longer preferred those conversations, those private interviews, so delicious to me, to the ebb and flow of a tumultuous society. He himself persuaded me to abandon myself to dissipation, only in order to authorise him to be abandoned. I became more pressing, and restrained him. I took the resolution of leaving him at liberty, that he might wish for me, and see me again with pleasure, after a comparison which I thought must be to my advantage : but young corrupters seized that soul, unfortunately too flexible ; and from the instant he had steeped his lips in the poisoned cup, his intoxication was without remedy, and his wandering without return. I wanted to recal him ; but it was too late.

" You destroy yourself, my dear," said I to him; " and though it be dreadful to me to see a husband torn from me who formed all my delight, yet it is more for your sake than my own that I lament your error. You seek happiness where it is most assuredly not to be found. False delights, shameful pleasures, will never satisfy your soul. The art of seducing and deceiving is the whole of that worldly art that now charms you; your wife knows it not, and you know it no better than she: that infamous school is not formed for our hearts; yours suffers itself to be lost in its intoxication; but it will last only for a time; the illusion will vanish like a dream; you will return to me, and find me still the same; an indulgent and faithful love waits your return, and all will be forgotten. You will have neither reproach nor complaint to fear from me: happy if I can console you, for all the chagrins which you may have occasioned me! But you, who know the value of virtue, and have tasted of her charms; you, whom vice shall have plunged from one abyss into another; you, whom it shall dismiss perhaps with contempt, to conceal at home with your wife the languishing days of a premature old age, your soul a prey to cruel remorse, how will you reconcile yourself to yourself? how will you be able still to relish the pure pleasure of being beloved by me; Alas! my love itself will be your punishment. The more lively also and tender that love will be, the more humiliating will it be for you. It is this, my dear marquis, "it is this that grieves and overpowers me. Cease to love me, if you please; I can forgive you, since I have ceased to be agreeable: but never render yourself unworthy of my tenderness, and contrive at least not to be obliged to blush before me." Would you believe it, my dear Lucilia? a piece of raillery was all his answer. He told me that I talked like an angel, and that what I had said deserved to be committed to writing. But seeing my eyes brimful of tears, " Nay, do not play the child! said he to me: " I love you; you know it; suffer

suffer me to amuse myself, and be assured that nothing attaches me."

" However, some officious friends failed not to inform me of every thing that could grieve and confound me. Alas! my husband himself in a short time desisted from keeping himself under my restraint, and even from flattering me.

" I shall not tell you, my dear Lucilia, the many marks of humiliation and disgust that I endured. Your griefs in comparison of mine would even appear light to you. Imagine, if possible, the situation of a virtuous and feeling soul, lively and delicate to excess, receiving every day new outrages from the only object of its affection; still living for him alone, when he lives no longer for her, when he is not ashamed to live for objects devoted to contempt. I spare your delicacy the most horrible part of this picture. Rejected, abandoned, sacrificed by my husband, I devoured my grief in silence: and if I afforded some profligate companies a topic of ridicule, a more just and compassionate public consoled me with its pity; and I enjoyed the sole good which his vice could not take from me, a spotless character. I have since lost that, my dear Lucilia. The wickedness of the women, whom my example humbled, could not bear to see me irreproachable. They interpreted, according to their wishes, my solitude and apparent tranquility: they ascribed to me as a lover, the first man who had the impudence to conceive that he was well received by me. My husband, to whom my presence was a continual reproach, and who found himself not yet sufficiently at liberty, in order to rid himself of my importunate grief, took the first pretext that was presented to him, and banished me to one of his country-seats. Unknown to the world, far from the sight of my misfortunes, I at least enjoyed in solitude the liberty of indulging my grief; but the cruel man caused it to be notified to me, that I might chuse a convent; that his seat of Florival was sold, and that I must retire from thence."---" Florival! interrupted Lu-

cilia, in a violent emotion. ‘ That was the place of my exile,’ resumed the marchioness. ‘ Ah, Madam ! what name have you pronounced ? ’ --- ‘ The name of my husband before he acquired the marquisate of Clarence.’ --- ‘ What do I hear ! Oh, Heaven ! oh, just Heaven ! is it possible ? ’ cried Lucilia, throwing herself upon the bosom of her friend. ‘ What is the matter ! what troubles you ! what sudden revolution ! Lucilia, recover your senses.’ --- ‘ How, Madam ! is Florival then the perfidious wretch, the villain, who betrays and dishonours you ? ’ --- ‘ Do you know him ? ’ --- ‘ It is the man, Madam, whom I adored, whom I have mourned for these five years past ; the man who would have had my last sighs ! ’ --- ‘ What say you ? ’ --- ‘ It is he, Madam ! Alas, what had been my lot ! ’ At these words Lucilia, bowing her face to the ground, ‘ Oh, my God ! ’ said she, ‘ oh, my God ! it was thou who stretched’it out thine hand towards me.’ The marchioness was confounded, and unable to recover from her astonishment. ‘ Doubt it not,’ said she to Lucilia ; ‘ the designs of Heaven are visibly manifested upon us : it brings us together, inspires us with a mutual confidence, and opens our hearts to each other, as two sources of light and consolation. Well, my worthy and tender friend, let us endeavour to forget at once both our misfortunes, and the person who occasioned them.’

From this time the tenderness and intimacy of their friendship increased to the highest degree : their solitude had pleasures known only to the unfortunate. But, in a little time, this calm was interrupted by the news of the danger which threatened the marquis. His dissipations cost him his life. At the point of death he asked for his virtuous wife. She tears herself from the arms of her forlorn companion ; hastens to him ; arrives ; and finds him expiring. ‘ Oh you, whom I have so greatly and so cruelly injured,’ said he to her on recollecting her, ‘ see the fruit of my irregularities ; see the dreadful stroke which the hand of God hath inflicted

flicted upon me. If I am yet worthy of your pity, raise up to Heaven your innocent voice, and lay my remorse before it.' The distracted wife would have thrown herself on his bosom. 'Stand off,' said he; 'I shudder at myself; my breath is the blast of death:' adding after a long silence. 'Do you know me again in this state to which my crimes have reduced me? Is this that pure soul that used to mix itself with thine? Is this that half of thyself? Is this that nuptial bed that received me when worthy of thee? Perfidious friends; detestable enchantresses; come, see, and shudder! Oh, my soul! who will deliver thee from this hideous prison?----Sir,' said he to his physician, 'have I long to live? My pains are intolerable. Leave me not, my generous friend; I should fall, but for thee, into the most dreadful despair Cruel death, compleat, compleat the expiation of my life. There are no evils which I do not deserve: I have betrayed, dishonoured, basely persecuted innocence and virtue itself.'

The marchioness, in the agonies of grief, made every moment new efforts to throw herself on the bed, from which they endeavoured to remove her. At last the unhappy man expired; his eyes fixed upon her, and his voice died away in asking her pardon.

The only consolation the marchioness was capable of, arose from that religious confidence with which so good a death inspired her. 'He was,' said she, 'more weak than wicked, and more frail than culpable. The world led him astray by its pleasures; God brought him back again by afflictions: he has chastised and pardons him----Yes, my husband, my dear Clarence,' cried she, 'now disengaged of the ties of blood and the world, thou waitest me in the bosom of thy God.'

Her soul filled with these holy ideas, she went to join her friend, whom she found at the foot of the altar. Lucilia's heart was rent within her at the relation of this cruel and virtuous death. They wept together for the last time; and some time after, the marchioness

consecrated to God, with the same vows as Lucilia, that heart, those charms, those virtues, of which the world was unworthy.

ALL OR NOTHING.

AT that time of life when it is so agreeable to be a widow, Cecilia could not help thinking of a fresh engagement. Two rivals disputed her choice. One, modest and plain, loved only her; the other, artful and vain, was above all things fond of himself. The first had the confidence of Cecilia; the second had her love. Cecilia was unjust, you will say: not at all. Plain folks neglect themselves; they think, that in order to please, it is sufficient to love with sincerity, and to convince others of their love. But there are few dispositions which do not require a little ornament. A man without art in the midst of the world, is like a lady at the opera without *rouge*.

Eraurus, with his usual frankness, had said to Cecilia, 'I love you!' and from that time loved her as if she had breathed nothing else: his love was his life. Floricourt had rendered himself agreeable by those little gallantries which have the air of pretending to nothing. Among the attentions which he paid to Cecilia, he chose, not the most passionate, but the most seducing. Nothing affected, nothing grave: he appeared so much the more amiable, as he seemed not to intend it. She pitied Eraurus; did not know an honest man: it was pity that it was impossible to love him. She dreaded Floricourt; he was a dangerous creature, and would perhaps be the ruin of a woman; but how was it possible to defend one's self? However, she would not deceive Eraurus. She must confess the whole to him.

'I esteem you, Eraurus,' said Cecilia to him, 'and I am sensible you merit more. But the heart has its caprices; my own dissents from my reason.'---'I understand you, Madam,' replied Eraurus, containing himself, but with tears in his eyes, 'your reason pleads for

for me, but your heart for another.'---' I confess it, and not without regret: I should be to blame, if I were free; but there is no answering for inclination.'---' Very well, Madam: I will love then alone; I shall derive the more glory from it.'---' But there, now, is the very thing I would not have.'---' Nor I neither; but that is to no purpose.'---' And what is to become of you?'---' Whatever Love and Nature please.'---' You distress me, Eразtus, by thus abandoning yourself.'---' I must abandon myself, when I cannot help it.'---' How unhappy am I in having ever known you!'---' Indeed you had need complain: it is a terrible misfortune to be beloved!'---' Yes, it is a misfortune to have cause to reproach one's self on account of a man we esteem.'---' You, Madam! you have nothing to reproach yourself. An honest man may complain of a coquette who trifles with him; or rather, she is unworthy of his complaints and regret; but what wrongs have you committed? Have you employed any seducing arts to attract me; any complaisance to retain me? Did I consult you about loving you? Who obliges you to think me amiable? Follow your own inclination, and I will follow mine. Be not afraid that I shall plague you.'---' No, but you will plague yourself; for, in short, you will see me.'---' What! would you be cruel enough to forbid me your sight?'---' Far from it, I assure you; but I wish to see you easy, and as my best friend.'---' Friend, let it be; the name signifies nothing.'---' But the name is not enough; I would bring you back in reality to that sentiment, so pure, so tender, and so solid, to that friendship which I feel for you.'---' Well, Madam, you may love me as you please; pray now permit me to love you as I can, and as much as I can. I only desire the liberty of being unhappy after my own manner.'

The obstinacy of Eразtus grieved Cecilia; but, after all, she had done her duty: so much the worse for him if he loved her still. She gave herself up, therefore, without concern or reproach, to her inclination for

for Floricourt. The most refined gallantry was put in practice to captivate her. Floricourt succeeded without difficulty. He knew how to please, thought he loved, and was happy, if he had chosen to be so. But self-love is the bane of love. It was but a trifle in Floricourt's eyes to be loved more than every thing else; he wanted to be loved solely, without reserve or participation. It is true that he set the example: he had detached himself for Cecilia from a prude whom he had ruined, and a coquette who ruined him; he had broke off with five or six of the vainest and foolishest young fellows in the world. He supped no where but at Cecilia's, where it was delicious supping; and he had the goodness to think of her amidst a circle of women, not one of whom equalled her either in grace or beauty. Such uncommon proceedings, not to speak of meit still more uncommon, had not they a right to exact from Cecilia the most absolute devotion!

In the mean time, as he was not sufficiently in love to be at all deficient in address, he took care not to suffer his pretensions to appear at first. Never had man before conquest been more complaisant, more docile, less assuming, than Floricourt; but from the moment he saw himself master of her heart, he became its tyrant. Difficult, imperious, jealous, he wanted to possess alone all the faculties of Cecilia's soul. He could not so much as permit her one idea except his own, much less a thought which came not from him. A decisive taste, a strict connection, was sure to displease him; but his meaning was to be guessed at. He would force her to ask him a hundred times over what he was thinking of, or what had put him out of humour: and it was never but as a favour that he confessed at last that such a thing had displeased him, or such a person made him dull. In short, as soon he saw that his will was a law, he declared it without ceremony; and it was submitted to without opposition. It was but a small matter to require of Cecilia the sacrifice of those pleasures which naturally presented themselves; he

he gave birth to them the oftener, on purpose to see them sacrificed to him. He spoke with transport of a play or an entertainment; he invited Cecilia to it; and they settled the party with ladies of his own naming: the hour came, they were dressed, the horses put to; he changed his design, and Cecilia was obliged to pretend a head-ach. He presented her a fine friend, whom he introduced as an adorable woman; she was found such; an intimacy was contracted. A week after, he confessed he had been deceived; she was affected, insipid, or giddy! and Cecilia was obliged to break off with her. Cecilia was in a short time reduced to slight acquaintances, whom, however, he complained of her seeing too often. She perceives not that her complaisance was changed into slavery. We think we pursue our own will when we pursue the will of those we love. Floricourt seemed to her only to forestall her own desires. She sacrificed every thing to him, without so much as suspecting she made him any sacrifices; yet Floricourt's self-love was not satisfied.

The company of the town, perfectly frivolous and transitory as it was, yet appeared to him too interesting. He extolled solitude; he repeated a hundred times that there was no true love but in the country, far from dissipation and noise, and that he should never be happy but in a retreat inaccessible to impertinents and rivals. Cecilia had a country-house to his wish. She had longed to pass the finest part of the year there with him, but could she do it with decency? He gave her to understand, that it was sufficient to take off all the air of a private party, by carrying such a friend along with them as Eraurus, and a woman of the character of Artenice. After all, if people should talk, their mariage which was soon to be concluded, would silence them. They set out, Eraurus was of the party, and this again was a refinement of Floricourt's self-love. He knew that Eraurus was his rival, his unsuccessful rival: it was the most flattering testimony that he could have of his triumph; therefore he had contrived excellently

lently to bring it about. His attentions to him had an air of compassion and superiority, at which Erastus was sometimes quite out of patience; but the tender and delicate friendship of Cecilia made him amends for these humiliations, and the fear of displeasing her made him disguise them. However, sure as he was that they were going into the country only in order to enjoy their love there at liberty, how could he resolve with himself to follow them? This reflection Cecilia made as well as he; she would have hindered him, but the party was settled, past revocation. Besides, Artenice was young and handsome. Solitude, opportunity, liberty, example, jealousy, and pique, might engage Erastus to turn towards her those vows which Cecilia could not listen to. Cecilia was modest enough to think it possible for a person to be unfaithful to her, and just enough to wish it; but it was betraying a very slight knowledge of the heart and character of Erastus.

Artenice was one of those women with whom love is only an arrangement of society, who are offended at a long attachment, who grow tired of a constant passion, and who depend sufficiently on the honesty of the men to deliver themselves up to them without reserve, and to quit them without hesitation. They had told her ‘ We are going to pass some time in the country; Erastus is to be there; will you make one?’ She replied, with a smile, ‘ With all my heart, a pleasant scheme!’ and the party was immediately settled. This was an additional torment to Erastus. Artenice had heard Cecilia praise her friend; as the most prudent man in the world, the honestest and most reserved. ‘ That is charming,’ said Artenice within herself; ‘ that is a kind of man to be taken and dismissed without precaution or noise. Happy or unhappy, that is not to the purpose: one is never at one’s ease but with people of this sort. An Erastus is a rarity!’ We may readily conclude, after these reflections, that Erastus did not want for encouragement.

Flo-

Floricourt behaved towards Cecilia with an assiduity perfectly distressing to an unsuccessful rival. Cecilia in vain endeavoured to constrain herself; her looks, her voice, her very silence betrayed her. Eraurus was upon the rack; but he concealed his pain. Artenice, like a dexterous woman, kept conveniently at a distance, and engaged Eraurus to follow her. ‘ How happy are they,’ said she one day to him as they were walking together: ‘ wholly taken up with each other, they feel a mutual satisfaction, and live only for themselves! It is a great happiness merely to love. What say you to it?’—

‘ Yes, Madam,’ replied Eraurus looking down, ‘ it is a great happiness when two—’ ‘ Oh, there are always two; for I do not see that one is alone in the world.’ —‘ I mean, Madam, two hearts equally sensible, and made to love one another equally.’ —‘ Equally! that is very unreasonable. For my part, I think that we ought to be less difficult, and to content ourselves with coming up within a small matter of it. Suppose I have more sensibility in my temper than he that attaches himself to me, must I punish him for it? Every one gives what he has, and we have no room to reproach him who contributes towards society that portion of sensibility which Nature has given him. I wonder that the coldest hearts are always the most delicate. You, for example; you, now, are a man that would expect one to love you to distraction.’ —‘ I, Madam! I expect nothing.’ —‘ You mistake me; that is not what I mean. You have enough in you to seduce a woman to be sure. I should not even be surprised at her conceiving an inclination for you.’ —‘ That may be, Madam: in point of folly, I doubt nothing; but if a woman were so foolish as to fall in love with me, I think she would be much to be pitied.’ —‘ Is this a caution, Sir, which you are so kind as to give me?’ —‘ You Madam! I flatter myself that you think me neither foolish nor weak enough to give you any such caution.’ —‘ Very well, you speak in general then, and except me out of politeness?’ —‘ The exception itself is unnecessary, Madam; for • you

you have nothing to do in the case.'—‘ Pardon me, Sir: it is I who tell you, that you have qualities enough to please, and that one might very easily love you to distraction; and it is to me that you reply, that one would be very much to be pitied if one loved you. Nothing, in my opinion can be more personal. Hey! what, you are embarrassed?’—‘ I confess that your railing embarrasses me; I know not how to reply to it; but it is not generous to attack me with weapons which I am not armed with.’—‘ But if I were in earnest, Eraurus; if nothing in the world were truer?’—‘ Your servant, Madam: the situation I am now reduced to will not permit me to amuse you any longer.’—‘ Ah! upon my word he is in downright earnest,’ said she, following him with her eyes. ‘ The tone of levity, the laughing air which I assumed, piqued him: he is a man for sentiment; I must talk to him in his own language. To-morrow, in this grove, one turn more, and my victory is decided.’

Eraurus's walk with Artenice had appeared very long to Cecilia. Eraurus returned from it quite penitive, and Artenice in triumph. ‘ Well,’ said Cecilia to her friend, in a very low voice, ‘ what do you think of Eraurus?’

‘ Why I like him pretty well; he has not quite tired me, and that is a great deal; he has some excellent qualities, and one might make an agreeable man of him. I find him only a little romantic in his manner. He expects sentiment; a fault of habit, a mere country prejudice, of which it is easy to break him.’—

‘ *He expects sentiment!*’ said Cecilia within herself; ‘ they are coming to terms already! This is going very far at one interview. I think Eraurus acts his part with a good grace. Well! but if he is happy am I to take it ill? Yet, it was wrong in him to want to persuade me that he was so greatly to be pitied. He might have spared my delicacy the heavy reproaches, which he knew very well I heaped upon myself. It is the

frenzy

frenzy of lovers always to exaggerate their pains. In short, he is consoled, and I am sufficiently comforted.'

Cecilia, in this idea, put less restraint on herself with regard to Floricourt. Erastus, whom nothing escaped, became more melancholy than usual. Cecilia and Artenice attributed his melancholy to the same cause. A growing passion always produces that effect. The day after, Artenice did not fail to contrive a *tête-à-tête* for Cecilia and Floricourt, by taking away Erastus along with her.

' You are angry,' said she, ' and I want to be reconciled to you. I see, Erastus, that you are not one of those men with whom love is to be treated with raillery: you look upon an engagement as one of the most serious things in the world; I like you the better for it.' ---' I! Not at all, Madam; I am too well persuaded that a serious passion is the highest extravagance, and that love is no longer a pleasure than while it is a jest.' ---' Be consistent then. Yesterday evening you required an equal sensibility, a mutual inclination.' ---' I required an impossibility; or, at least, the most uncommon thing in the world; and I maintain, that without this union, which is so difficult that it must be given up, the wisest and surest way is to make a jest of love, without annexing any chimerical value and importance to it.' ---' Upon my word, my dear Erastus, you talk like an angel. Why, indeed, should we torment ourselves to no purpose, endeavouring to love more than we are able? We agree, settle matters, grow weary of each other, and part. On casting up the account, we have had pleasure: the time, therefore, was well employed; and would to Heaven we could be so amused all our lives!' ---' This now,' said Erastus within himself, ' is a very convenient way of thinking!' ---' I well know,' continued she, ' what they call a serious passion: nothing is more gloomy, nothing more dull. Uneasiness, jealousy, are continually tormenting the two unhappy creatures. They pretend to be satisfied with each other, and weary themselves to

death.'—‘ Ah, Madam! what is it you say? They want nothing, if they love truly. Such an union is the charm of life, the delight of the soul, the fullness of happiness!’—‘ Really, Sir, you are mad with your eternal inconsistencies. What would you have, pray?’—‘ What is not to be found; Madam; and what perhaps will never be seen.’—‘ A fine expectation, truly! And in the mean while your heart will continue disengaged?’—‘ Alas, would to Heaven it could!’—‘ It is not so then, Erastus?’—‘ No, certainly Madam; and you would pity its condition, could you but conceive it.’ At these words he left her, lifting his eyes towards heaven, and heaving a profound sigh. ‘ This, then,’ said Artenice, ‘ is what they call a reserved man! He is so much so, that it makes him a downright beast. By good luck, I have not explained myself. Possibly I ought to have spoken out: bashful people must be assisted. But he walks off with an exclamation, without giving one time to ask him what possesses or afflicts him. He shall see: he must declare; for, in short, I am come to a compromise, and my honour is concerned.’

Floricourt, during supper, wanted to entertain himself at the expence of Erastus. ‘ So,’ said he to Artenice, ‘ where have you been? Nothing should be concealed from friends, and we set you the example.’—‘ Right,’ said Artenice, with indignation, ‘ if we knew how to profit by the examples that are set us; or did we even know what we would be at. If one talks of a serious passion, the gentleman treats it as a jest; if one agrees to its being a jest, he goes back again to the serious.’—‘ It is easy for you, Madam,’ said Erastus, ‘ to turn me into ridicule; I submit to it as much as you please.’—‘ Nay, Sir, I have no such design; but we are among friends, let us explain. We have not time to observe and guess at each other. I please you, that you have given me to understand; I will not dissemble that you are agreeable enough to me. We are not come here to be idle spectators; honour itself requires that

that we should be employed ; let us make an end, and understand one another. How is it that you would love me ? How would you have me love you ?"—' I Madam !' cried Erastus, ' I do not want you to love me .'—" What, Sir ! have you deceived me then ?"—' Not at all, Madam ; I call heaven to witness, that I have not said one word to you in the least like love .'—" Nay, then,' said she to him, ' getting up from table, ' this is a piece of effrontery beyond any thing I ever saw .' Floricourt would have detained her. ' No, Sir, I am not able to endure the sight of a man who has the assurance to deny the dull and insipid declarations with which he has affronted me, and which I had the goodness to put up with, prepossessed by the commendations that had been given me, I know not why, of this wretched creature.'

' Artenice is gone off in a rage,' said Cecilia to Erastus on seeing him again the next day ; ' what has passed between you ?"—' Some idle talk, Madam ; the result of which on my side was, that nothing is more to be dreaded than a serious passion, and nothing is more despicable than a frivolous one. Artenice has seen me sigh ; she thought I sighed for her ; and I undeceived her, that is all.'—" You undeceived her ! that is handsome enough ; but you should have done it with a little more art !"—' How, Madam, could she dare to tell you that we were on the brink of love, and would you have had me contain myself ! What would you have thought of my assent, or even of my silence ?"—' That you were in the right. Artenice is young and handsome, and your attachment would have been merely an amusement.'—" I am not in an humour to amuse myself, Madam ; and I beg of you to spare the advice, by which I shall never profit.'—" But you are now alone with us, and you yourself must perceive that you will act but a very strange part here.'—" I shall act, Madam, the part of a friend : nothing is, in my opinion, more honourable.'—" But, Erastus, how will you be able to support it ?"—' Leave that to me, Ma-

dam, and do not make yourself at all uneasy on my account.'---' I cannot help being uneasy; for, in short, I know your situation, and indeed it is dreadful.'---' May be so; but it is neither in your power nor mine to render it better: let me alone, and let us talk no more of it.'---' Talk no more of it! Soon said; but you are unhappy, and I am the cause.'---' Oh! no, Madam; no: I have told you so an hundred times; you have nothing to reproach yourself with. In God's name be easy.'---' I should be eaty if you could but be so.'---' Nay, now, you are cruel. Though you should insist upon knowing what passes in my soul, yet I should not have one pang the less, but you would have a piece of chagrin the more for it: pr'ythee now forget that I love you.'---' Hey! how? forget it? I see it every moment.'---' You would have me leave you, then?'---' Why, our situation would require it.'---' Very well: drive me away then, that will be the best.'---' I drive you away, my friend! It is for you that I am in pain.'---' O, then, for my part I declare to you, that I cannot live without you.'---' You think so; but absence—' 'Absence! a fine remedy for love like mine!'—' Doubt not its efficacy, my dear Erasmus: there are women more amiable and less unjust than I.'—' I am glad of it; but that is all, one to me.'—' You think so at present.'—' I am now what I shall be all my life long: I know myself; I know the women. Do not be afraid that any of them can make me either happy or unhappy.'—' I believe that you would not attach yourself at first; but you will dissipate in the world.'—' And with what? Nothing in it amuses me. Here, at least I have no time to grow dull: I see you, or am going to see you; you talk to me kindly; I am sure that you do not forget me; and if I were at a distance from you, I have an imagination that would be my torment.'—' And could it paint any thing more cruel than what you see?'—' I see nothing, Madam; I desire to see nothing, spare me the uneasiness of being your confidant.'---'

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'Indeed I admire your moderation.'---'Yes, I have great merit, indeed, in being moderate! Would you have me beat you?'---'No; but people usually complain on such occasions.'---'And of what?'---'I do not know; but I cannot reconcile so much love with so much reason.'---'Be assured, Madam, every one loves after his own fashion: mine is not to rave. If ill language would please you, I could bestow as much as another; but I doubt whether that would succeed.'---'I lose nothing by that, Erastus; and at the bottom of your heart---' 'No, I vow that my heart respects you as much as my mouth. I never surprised myself one moment possessed with the least anger against you.'---'Yet you torment yourself, I see plainly. Melancholy gains upon you.'---'I am not very gay.'---'You hardly eat.'---'I live, at least.'---'I am sure you do not sleep at all.'---'Pardon me, I sleep a little, and that is the happiest part of my time; for I see you in my slumbers such almost as I wish you to be.'---'Erastus!'---'Cecilia!'---'You offend me.'---'Nay, Madam! it is too much to want to rob me of my dreams. You are, in reality, such as you think proper; suffer me then, at least in idea, to have you such as pleases me.'---'Do not be angry, but let us talk reason. These very dreams which I ought not to know of, nourish your passion.'---'So much the better, Madam, so much the better: I should be very sorry to be cured of it.'---'And why do you persist to love me without hope?'---'Without hope! I am not reduced to that yet: if your sentiments were just they would be durable. But---' 'Do not flatter yourself, Erastus; I am in love, and for my whole life.'---'I do not flatter myself, Cecilia; it is you that slander yourself. Your passion is a fever which will have its period. It is not generous to speak ill of one's rival: I am silent; but I refer it to the goodness of your disposition, to the delicacy of your heart---' 'They are both blind.'---'That is owning they are not so. One must have seen, or have had some glimmerings, even to know that

we see badly.'---' Well, I confess it: I remember to have discovered faults in Floricourt; but I know nothing more in him.'---' That knowledge will come to you, Madam, and on that I depend.'---' And if I marry Floricourt, as, indeed, every thing tends that way---' 'In that case I shall have nothing more either to hope or to fear; and my resolution is already taken.' 'And what is it?'---' To give over loving you.'---' And how are you to do that?'---' How? nothing so easy. If I were in the army, and a ball---' 'O Heavens!'---' Is it so difficult, then, to suppose one's self in the army?'---' Ah, my cruel friend, what is it you say? and with what levity do you tell me of a mischief for which I should never forgive myself!' Cecilia began to melt at this idea, when Floricourt came up to them. Eraftus soon left them, according to his usual practice. 'Our friend, my dear Cecilia,' said Floricourt, 'is a very gloomy mortal; what say you?' ---' He is an honest creature,' replied Cecilia, 'whose virtues I respect.'---' Faith, with all his virtues I wish he would go and indulge his reveries somewhere else; we want gaiety and company in the country.'---' Perhaps he has some reason to be pensive and solitary.'---' Yes, I believe so, and I guess it. You blush, Cecilia! I shall be discreet, and your embarrassment imposes silence on me.'---' And what should be my embarrassment, Sir? You believe that Eraftus loves me, and you have reason to believe it. I pity him, I advise him, I talk to him as his friend; there is nothing in all this to blush at.'---' Such a confession my beautiful Cecilia, renders you still more deserving of esteem; but allow that it comes a little too late.'---' I did not think myself, obliged, Sir, to inform you of a secret which was not mine; and I should have concealed it from you all my life long, if you had not surprised me into the discovery. There is in these kinds of confidences an ostentation and cruelty not in my disposition. We should at least respect those whom we have made unhappy.'---' There is heroism for you!' cried Floricourt
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in a tone of anger and irony. ‘ And does this friend whom you use so well know how far matters are gone between us ? ’ --- ‘ Yes, Sir, I have told him all,’ --- and he has still the goodness to stay here ! ’ --- ‘ I endeavoured to dispose him to leave us.’ --- ‘ Ah ! I have nothing more to say ; I should have been surprized if your delicacy had not forerun mine. You perceived the indecency of suffering a man who loves you to continue in your house, at the very moment in which you are going to declare for his rival. There would even be inhumanity in it, to render him a witness of the sacrifice you make me. When is he to depart ? ’ --- ‘ I do not know, I have not had the courage to prescribe the time ; and he has not the resolution to determine upon it.’ --- ‘ You rally, Cecilia : who then is to propose to him to rid us of his presence ? it would not be handsome in me.’ --- ‘ It shall be myself, Sir ; do not be uneasy.’ --- ‘ And what un-sainess do I shew, Madam ! Would you do me the honour of supposing me to be jealous ? I assure you I am not in the least so ; my delicacy has you self only in view, and for the little pain it may give you---’ ‘ It will give me pain, no doubt, to deprive a respectable friend of the only consolation that is left him : but I know how to do myself violence.’ --- ‘ Violence, Madam ! that is very strong. I w^{ould} have no violence ; that would be the way to render me odious, and I shall therefore go myself, and persuade this respectable friend not to abandon you.’ --- ‘ Go on Sir, your raillery is mighty well timed ; and I deserve, indeed, that you should talk to me in this manner.’ --- ‘ I am very unhappy, Madam, to have displeased you,’ said Floricourt, on letting her eyes bedewed with tears. ‘ Forgive me my imprudence. I did not know all the concern you had for my rival and your friend.’ At these words he left her, overcome with grief.

Eraulus, at his return, found her in this situation. ‘ What is the matter, Madam ? ’ said he, accosting her ; ‘ in tears ! ’ --- ‘ You see, Sir, the most wretched of women : I am sensible that my weakness will ruin me, and

and yet am unable to cure myself. A man, to whom I have sacrificed every thing, doubts of my sentiments, treats me with contempt, and suspects me.'---' I understand, Madam, he is jealous, and must be made easy. Your quiet is concerned in it, and there is nothing that I would not sacrifice to a concern so dear to me. Adieu: may you be happy! and I shall be less wretched.' Cecilia's tears burst forth afresh at these words. 'I have exhorted you to fly me, said she to him; I advised you to it as a friend, and for your own sake. The effort I made over my own soul had nothing humiliating in it, but to banish you to gratify an unreasonable man, to rid him of a suspicion which I ought never to have feared, to be obliged to justify my love by the sacrifice of friendship, is shameful and overwhelming! Never did any thing cost me so dear before.'---' It must be so, Madam, if you love Floricourt.'---'Yes, my dear Erasmus, pity me: I do love him, and it is in vain I reproach myself for it.' Erasmus listened no longer, but went off.

Floricourt made use of every method to appease Cecilia; his gentleness, his complaisance, were not to be equalled, when his will was fulfilled. Erasmus was almost forgot; and what is it we do not forget for the person we love, when we have the happiness to believe ourselves beloved again! One only amusement, aye! and that a very innocent one, yet remained to Cecilia in their solitude. She had brought up a goldfinch, which, by a wonderful instinct, answered to her caresses. He knew her voice, and would fly to meet her. He never sung but when he saw her; he never eat but out of her hand, nor drank but out of her mouth: she would give him his liberty, he would use it but for a minute, and as soon as she called him, he flew to her immediately. No sooner was he placed on her bosom, than a sensibility seemed to agitate his wings, and to precipitate the warblings of his melodious throat. Could one believe that the haughty Floricourt was offended at the attention which Cecilia paid to the sensibility

sibility and sportiveness of this little animal! 'I will know,' said he one day within himself, 'whether the love she entertains for me is superior to these weaknesses. It would be pleasant, indeed, if she should be more attached to her goldfinch than her lover! Yet it may be so: I will make the experiment, and that before the evening be over.'—And where is the little bird?' said he, accosting her with a smile. 'He is enjoying the open air and liberty; he is somewhere fluttering in the garden.'—'And are you not afraid that at last he should accustom himself to that, and never return more?'—'I would forgive him if he found himself happier.'—'Ah! pr'ythee now let us see if he be faithful to you. Will you please to recal him?' Cecilia made the usual signal, and the bird flew to her hand. 'I hat is charming,' says Floricourt; but he is too dear to you; I am jealous of him, and I would have *all or nothing* from the person I love.' At these words he attempted to lay hold of the dear little bird, in order to throttle it: she set up a cry; the bird flew away; Cecilia, affighted, grew pale, and lost all sensation. The servants ran to her assistance, and recalled her to life. As soon as she opened her eyes, she saw at her feet, not the man whom she loved best, but to her the most odious of mortals. 'Be gone, Sir!' said she to him with horror: 'This last stroke has given me a clear insight of your frightful character, equally mean and cruel. Out of my house! never to enter it more! You are too happy, that I still respect myself more than I despise you.—O, my dear and worthy Eraurus! to what a man should I have sacrificed you!' Floricourt went out, fuming with rage and shame: the bird returned to care's his beautiful mistress; and it is unnecessary to add, that Eraurus saw himself recalled.

THE PRETENDED PHILOSOPHER.

CLARISSA had for some years heard of nothing but philosophers. 'What kind of mortals are they?' said she; 'I want much to see one.' They tell her • first,

first, that true philosophers were very rare, and, not much addicted to communication; but in every other point, they were of all men the plainest, without the least singularity. ‘ There are two sorts, then?’ said she; ‘ for in all the accounts that I hear, a philosopher is a fantastical being, who pretends to be like nothing.’ Of those, they told her, there were enough every where: ‘ you shall have as many as you please of them: nothing so easily contrived.’

Clariſſa was in the country with an idle party who sought only to amuse themselves. They presented to her, a few days after, the ſententious Aristus. ‘ The gentleman, then, is a philoipher?’ ſaid ſhe on ſeeing him. ‘ Yes, Madam,’ replied Aristus. ‘ This philoſophy is a fine thing; is it not?’—‘ Why, Madam, it is the knowledge of good and evil; or, if you please, wisdom.’—‘ Is that all?’ ſaid Doris. ‘ And the fruit of this wiſdom,’ continued Clariſſa, ‘ is to be happy, no doubt?’—‘ And, Madam, to make others happy also.’—‘ I ſhould be a philosopher to them,’ ſaid the ſimple Lucinda in a low voice, ‘ for I have been told a hundred times, that it depended only on me to be happy by making others happy.’—‘ Right! who does not know that?’ resumed Doris. ‘ It is a mere ſage ſecret.’

Ariſtus, with a ſmile of contempt, gave them to understand, that philosophical happiness was not that which a pretty woman can taste, and make others taste. ‘ I doubted it much,’ ſaid Clariſſa; ‘ nothing is more unlike, I ſhould think, than a fine woman and a philoſopher.’—But let us hear, firſt, how the ſage Aristus makes uſe of it, in order to be happy himſelf?—‘ That is very ſimple, Madam: I have no prejudices, I depenſ on nobody, I live on little I love nothing, and I ſpeak every thing that I think.’—‘ To love nothing,’ obſerved Cleon, ‘ ſeems to me a diſpoſition but little favourable to make people happy.’—‘ How, Sir!’ replied the philosopher; what do we do good only to that we love? Do you love the miserable wretch whom

whom you relieve as you go along? It is just so that we distribute to mankind the assistance of our lights.'----' And it is with your lights then,' said Doris, 'that you make people happy?'----' Yes, Madam, and that we are so, ourselves.' The fat Lady President of Ponval thought this happiness very slender. 'Has a philosopher,' demanded Lucinda, 'many pleasures?'--' He has but one, Madam; that of despising them all?'----' That must be very entertaining,' said Mrs. President roughly. 'And if you love nothing, Sir, what do you do with your soul?'----' What do I do with it? I employ it to the only use worthy of it. I contemplate, I observe the wonders of Nature.'----' Aye, but what can that nature have interesting to you,' replied Clarissa, 'if mankind, if your equals, have nothing in them to attach you?'----' My equals, Madam! I will not dispute about words; but that expression is a little too strong. But however that be, nature, which I study, has to me the attraction of curiosity, which is the spring of understanding; as that which is called desire is the movement of sentiment.'----' Oh! aye, I conceive,' said Doris, 'that curiosity is & nething; but do you reckon desire, Sir, as nothing?'----' Desire, I have already told you, is an attraction of another sort.'--' Why, then, d liver yourself up to one of these attractions, while you resist the other?'----' Ah, Madam, because the enjoyments of the understanding are not mingled with any bitterness, and all those of the senses contain a concealed poison.'--' But, at least,' said Cleon, 'you have senses?'----' Yes, I have senses, if you please; but they have no dominion over me: my mind receives their impressions as a glass, and nothing but the pure objects of the understanding can affect it strongly.'----' A very insipid fellow this!' said Doris to Clarissa in a very low voice: 'who brought this strange creature here?'----' Peace,' replied Clarissa, 'this will do for the country; there is a way to divert ourselves with him.'

Cleon, who wanted still to develope the character of
Clarissa,

Aristus, testified his surprise of seeing him resolved to love nothing : ‘ For, after all,’ said he, ‘ do you know nothing amiable ? ’—‘ I know surfaces,’ replied the philosopher, ‘ but I know how to defy the bottom.’—‘ It remains, then, to know,’ said Cleon, ‘ whether this defiance be well founded.’—‘ Oh ! very well founded, believe me : I have seen enough to convince me that this globe is peopled only by fools, knaves, and ingrates.’—‘ If you were to consider it well,’ said Clarissa to him in a tone of reproach, ‘ you would be less unjust, and perhaps also more happy.’

The sage, confounded for a moment, pretended not to have heard. Word was brought that dinner was ready ; he gave his hand to Clarissa, and seated himself next her at table. ‘ I would fain,’ said she to him, ‘ reconcile you to human nature.’—‘ Impossible, Madam ! impossible ! man is the most vicious of beings. What can be more cruel, for example, than the spectacle of your dinner ? How many innocent animals are sacrificed to the voraciousness of man ? The ox, from which you have this beef, what harm had he done you ? And the sheep, from whence came this mutton, the symbol of candour, what right had you over his life ? And this pigeon, the ornament of our dove-houses, just torn from its tender mate ? O heavens ! if there had been a Buffon among the animals, in what ~~ways~~^{order} would he place man ? The tiger, the vulture, the shark, would yield to him the full rank among those of prey.’ All the company concluded that the philosopher subsisted only on pulse, and they were afraid to offer him any part of the meats which he enumerated with so much compassion. ‘ Nay, help me,’ said he ; ‘ since they have gone so far as to kill them, somebody must eat them.’ He declaimed, in like manner, at the same time that he eat of every thing, against the profusion of victuals, the pains taken to procure them, and the delicacy of them. ‘ O happy time ! ’ said he, ‘ when man browsed with the goats.—Some drink, pray ?

* Buffon the famous naturalist.

Nature is greatly degenerated!' The philosopher got drunk in describing the clear brook where his fore-fathers used to quench their thirst.

Cleon seized the moment when wine makes us say every thing, to discover the principle of this philosophical ill-humour, which extended itself towards all mankind. ' Well,' said he to Anistus, ' you are here now among men; do you find them so odious? Confess that you condemned them on hearsay, and that they do not deserve all the harm that is said of them?' ---' On hearsay, Sir! Learn that a philosopher judges not but after his own notions: it is because I have well considered and well developed mankind, that I believe them vain, proud, and unjust.' ---' Ah! pr'y-thee now,' interrupted Cleon, spare us a little: our admiration of you merits at least some tenderness; for, in short, you cannot reproach us with not honouring merit.' ---' And how do you honour it?' replied the philosopher briskly; ' is it by neglect and detraction that it is to be honoured? Oh! the philosophers of Greece were the oracles of their age, the legislators of their country. Now-a-days wisdom and virtue languish in oblivion. ~~intrigue~~, meanness, and servility, carry all before them.' ---' Suppose that were the case,' said Cleon, ' it would possibly be the fault of those great men who disdain to shew themselves.' ---' And would you have them, then, run their heads into the faces, or rather throw themselves at the feet of the dispensers of rewards?' ---' It is true,' said Cleon, ' that they might spare themselves the trouble, and that such a person as yourself, (pardon my bringing up your name)' ---' No harm done,' replied the philosopher with great humility. ' Such a person as yourself ought to be dispensed from paying his court.' ---' I pay my court! Ah! let them wait for that; I believe their pride would never have much to plume itself upon: I know how to set a right value on myself, thank heaven; and I would go and live in the desarts rather than disgrace my being.' ---' It would be great

pity,' said Cleon, that society should lose you: born to enlighten mankind, you ought to live amongst them. You cannot think, ladies, the good that a philosopher does to the world: I will lay a wager, now, that this gentleman has discovered a multitude of moral truths, and that there are perhaps at this very time fifty virtues of his own making.'---'Virtues!' replied Aristus, looking down, 'I have not struck out many of them, but I have unveiled many vices.'-----'How, Sir!' said Lucinda to him, 'why did not you leave them their veil? They would have been less ugly.'---'Your humble servant for that,' replied Madam de Penval: 'I love an acknowledged vice better than an equivocal virtue; one knows at least what to depend on.'---'And yet see how they requite us!' cried Aristus with indignation. 'It is on this account that I have taken the resolution to live only for myself: let the world go on as it may.'---'No,' said Clarissa politely to him, getting up from table, 'I must have you live for us. Have you any urgent business at Paris?'---'None, Madam: a philosopher has no business.'---'Well then, I shall keep you here. The country should be agreeable to philosophy; and I promise you solitude, repose, and freedom.'---'Freedom, Madam!' said the philosopher, in an articulate voice; 'I am greatly afraid you will fail in your promise.'

The company dispersed to walk, and Aristus with a thoughtful air pretended to go and meditate in a walk, where he mused without thinking of any thing. I mistake; he thought of Clarissa, and said within himself, 'A handsome woman, a good house, all the conveniences of life: that promises well! let us see the end. It must be confessed,' continued he, 'that society is a pleasant scene: if I were gallant now, forward, complaisant, amiable, they would scarce pay any attention to me: they see nothing else in the world, and the vanity of women is surfeited with these common homages; but to tame a bear, to civilize a philosopher, to bend his pride, to soften his soul, is a triumph.'

umph difficult and uncommon, with which their self-love is not a little flattered. Clarissa, of her own accord, rushes into my toils; let me expect her there without coming to any compromise.'

The company, on their side, amused themselves at the expence of Aristus. 'He is a pleasant original enough,' said Doris; 'what shall we strike out of him?'---'A comedy,' replied Cleon: 'and if Clarissa will come into it, my plan is already settled.' He communicated his thought, all the company applauded it, and Clarissa, after some difficulty, consented to play her part. She was much younger and bolder than was necessary to move a philosopher; and some words, some looks, which had escaped our sage, seemed to promise an excellent catastrophe. She threw herself therefore, as it were by chance, into the same walk with Aristus. 'I put you out,' said she; 'excuse me, I was only passing.'---'You do not interrupt me, Madam, I can meditate with you.'---'You will do me pleasure,' says Clarissa: 'I perceive that a philosopher does not think like another man, and I should be very glad to see things with your eyes.'---'It is true, Madam, that ~~philosophy~~ creates, as it were, a new world. The vulgar see only in the gross; the details of nature are a spectacle reserved for us; it is for us that she seems to have disposed, with an art so wonderful, the fibres of these leaves, the stamina of these flowers, the texture of this rind; an ant-hill is to me a republic, and each of the atoms that compose the world, appear in my eyes a new world.'---'That is admirable!' said Clarissa: 'what was it took up your thoughts this moment!'---'These birds,' replied the sage. 'They are happy, are they not?'---'Ah! very happy, without doubt; and can they be otherwise? Independence, equality, few wants, ready pleasures, oblivion of the past, no concern for the future, and their whole solicitude to support life, and to perpetuate their species; what lessons, Madam! what lessons for mankind!'---'Confess, then, that the country is a delicious abode;

for, in short, it brings us nearer to the condition of animals ; and, like them, we seem to have no laws there, but the gentle instinct of Nature.'---' Ah, Madam ! how true is all this ! but the impression is effaced from the heart of man : society has ruined every thing.' ---' You are right ; this society is something very troublesome ; and since we want nobody it would be quite natural to live for one's self.'---' Alas ! that is what I have said a hundred times, and what I never cease to write ; but nobody will listen to me : you, Madam, for example, who seem to acknowledge the truth of this principle, could you have the strength to practise it ?'---' I cannot but wish,' said Clarissa, ' that philosophy should come in fashion : I should not be the last to come into it, as I ought not to be the first to set it.' ---' This is the language that every one speaks : nobody will venture to set the example ; and, in the mean time, human nature groans, loaded with the yoke of opinion, and the chains of custom.'---' What would you have us do, Sir ? Our ease, our honour, all that we hold dear, depends on decorums.'---' Well Madam, observe then these tyrannical decorums ; wear virtues as you do habits, made to ~~the fashions~~ of the age ; but your soul is your own : society has no right but to extirpals, and you owe it only appearances. The decorums, so much insisted on, are themselves nothing more than appearances well preserved : but the interior, Madam, the interior is the sanctuary of the will, and the will is independent.'---' I conceive,' said Clarissa, ' that I may wish for what I please, provided I go no farther.'---' To be sure,' replied the philosopher, ' it is better to stop there than to run the hazard of giving into imprudences : for, Madam, do you know what a vicious woman is ? It is a woman who has no regard, no respect to herself, in any case.'---' What, Sir !' demanded Clarissa, affecting an air of satisfaction, ' does vice, then, consist only in imprudence ?'---' Before I answer you, Madam, permit me to ask you, what is vice in your eyes ? Is it not that which overturns

turns order, which hurts, or which may hurt?—‘ The very thing.’—‘ Very well, Madam; all that is external. Why then submit your sentiments and your thoughts to prejudice! See in these birds that soft and unrestrained liberty which Nature gave you, and which you have lost.—‘ Ah!’ said Clarissa with a sigh, ‘ the death of my husband had restored me this precious gift; but I am on the point of renouncing it again.—‘ O, Heaven! what do I hear,’ cried he; ‘ are you going to form a new chain?’—‘ Why, I do not know!’—‘ You do not know!’—‘ They will have it so.’—‘ And who, Madam? who are the enemies who dare propose it to you? No; believe me, marriage is a yoke, and freedom is the supreme good. But, however, who is the husband whom they would give you?’—‘ Cleon.’—‘ Cleon, Madam! I am no longer surprised at the unconstrained air he assumes here. He questions, decides, condescends sometimes to be affable, and has that haughty politeness which seems to let himself down to a level with us; it is plain that he is doing the honours of his own house; and I know, from henceforth, the respect and deference that I owe him.’—‘ You owe to each other mutual civility, and I intend that with me every body shall be on an equality.’—‘ You intend it, Clarissa! Alas, your choice destroys all equality between mankind, and the person who is to possess you.—But let us talk no more of it, I have said too much already; this place is not made for a philosopher; permit me to leave it.’—‘ No,’ said she to him, ‘ I have need of you, and you plunge me into irresolutions, from which you alone can draw me. It must be confessed, that philosophy is a very comfortable thing; but if a philosopher were a deceiver, he would be a very dangerous friend! Adieu, I would not have them see us together; I am going to rejoin the company; come to us soon.—See there, then,’ said she as she was going from him, ‘ what they call a philosopher!’—‘ Courage!’ said he on his side; ‘ Cleon hangs only by a thread.’ Clarissa with blushes, gave an ac-

count of the first scene, and her beginning was received with applause: but the lady president, knitting her brow, ‘ Do you intend,’ said she, ‘ that I should be only a looker on? No, no; I must play my part, and I assure you it shall be pleasant. Do you think that you shall subdue this sage? No: I will have the honour of it.’—‘ You, Madam!’—‘ Oh! you may laugh: my fifty years, my triple chin, and my mustaches of Spanish snuff, defy all your graces.’ The whole company applauded this challenge by redoubled peals of laughter. ‘ Nothing is more serious,’ resumed she; ‘ and if it be not enough to triumph over one, you have only to join, and dispute the conquest with me; I defy you all three. Go, divine Doris; charming Lu-cinda; admirable Clarissa; go and display before his eyes all the seductions of beauty and coquetry; I laugh at it.’ She spoke these words with a tone of resolution sufficient to make her rivals tremble.

Cleon affected to appear dull and pensive at the arrival of Aristus, and Clarissa assumed with the philosopher a reserved air of mystery. They spoke little, but ogled much. Aristus on retiring to his apartment, found it furnished with all the inventions of luxury. ‘ O heavens! said he to the company, who for the sake of diverting themselves had conducted him thither; ‘ O heavens! is it not ridiculous that all this preparation should be made for one man’s sleep? Was it thus that they slept at Lacedæmon? O Lycurgus, what wouldest thou say! a toilette for me! This is downright mockery. Do they take me for a Sybarite? I must retire, I cannot stand it.’—‘ Would you have us,’ said Clarissa, ‘ unfurnish it on purpose for you? Take my advice, and enjoy the pleasures of life when they present themselves: a philosopher should know how to put up with every thing, and accommodate himself to every thing.’—‘ Very well, Madam,’ said he, somewhat appeased, ‘ I must at present comply with you; but I shall never be able to sleep on this heap of down. Upon my word,’ says he, as he laid him.

himself down, ‘this luxury is a fine thing !’ and the philosopher fell asleep.

His dreams recalled to his remembrance his conversation with Clarissa, and he awoke with the pleasing idea, that this virtue by convention, which is called prudence in women, would make but a feeble resistance against him.

He was not yet up when a lacquey came to propose the bath to him. The bath was a good presage. ‘Be it so,’ said he; ‘I will bathe: the bath is a natural institution.’ As for perfumes, the earth yields them: let us not disdain her presents.’ He would fain have made use of the toilette which they had provided for him; but shame restrained him. He contented himself with giving to his philosophical negligence the most decent air he could, and the glass was twenty times consulted. ‘What a fright you have made of yourself !’ said Clarissa to him on seeing him appear: ‘why not dressed like the rest of the world ? This habit, this wig, give you a vulgar air which you have not naturally.’—‘What ! Madam is it by the air that we are to judge of mankind ? Would you have me submit to the ~~caprices~~ of fashion, and be dressed like your Cleons?’—‘Why not, Sir? do you not know that they derive an advantage from your simplicity, and that it is this in particular that lessens in people’s opinions the consideration due to you ? I myself, in order to do you justice, have need of my reflection: the first sight makes against you, and it is very often the first sight that decides. Why not give to Virtue all the charms of which she is capable !’—‘No, Madam, Art is not made for her. The more naked, the more beautiful; they disguise her when they endeavour to adorn her.’—‘Very well, Sir, let her contemplate herself alone at her ease; as for me, I declare, that this rustic and low air displeases me. Is it not strange, that having received from nature a distinguished figure, any one should take a pride in degrading it ?’—‘But, Madam, what would you say if a philosopher should employ his

attention about his dress, and set himself off like your marquis?'—‘ I would say he seeks to please; and he does right; for, do not flatter yourself, Ariftus, there is no pleasing without taking a good deal of pains.’—‘ Ah! I desire nothing so much as to please in your eyes.’—‘ If such a desire really possesses you,’ replied Clarissa, with a tender look, ‘ bestow at least a quarter of an hour upon it. Here, Jasmin, Jasmin! go dress the gentleman’s head.’ Ariftus, blushing, yields at length to these gentle instances; and now behold the sage at his toilette!

The nimble hand of Jasmin disposes his locks with art; his physiognomy now displays itself; he admires the metamorphosis, and is scarce able to conceive it. ‘ What will they say on seeing me?’ said he to himself; ‘ let them say what they please; but the philosopher has a good face.’ He presents himself blown up with pride but with an awkward and bashful air. ‘ Aye, now,’ said Clarissa, ‘ you look handsome. There is nothing now but the colour of those cloaths, that offends my eyes.’—‘ Ah! Madam, for the sake of my reputation, leave me at least this characteristic of the gravity of my condition.’—‘ A—t—hat then, by your leave, is this chimerical condition which you have so much at heart? I approve very much of people’s being wise; but in my opinion all sorts of colours are indifferent to wisdom. Is this chesnut of Mr. Guillaume more founded in nature, than the sky blue or rose-colour? By what caprice is it that you imitate in your garments the husk of the chesnut, rather than the leaf of the rose or the tuft of the lily with which the spring is crowned! Ah, for my part I confess to you that the rose colour charms my sight: that colour has something, I know not what, of softness in it, which goes to my very soul, and I should think you the handsomest creature living in a suit of rose-colour.’—‘ Rose-colour, Madam! O heavens! a philosopher in rose-colour!’—‘ Yes, Sir, a very rose-colour: what would you have? It is my weakness. By writing

to Paris directly, you may have it by to-morrow afternoon, can you not?'—'What Madam?'—'A suit for the country of the colour of my ribbands.'—'No, Madam, it is impossible.'—'Pardon me, nothing is easier; the workmen need only be up all night.'—'Alas! it is of mighty consequence to me what the time is which they are to employ in rendering me ridiculous? Consider, I beseech you, that such an extravagance as this would ruin my reputation.'—'Well, Sir, when you shall have lost that reputation, you will gain another, and it is odds that you will gain by the exchange.'—'I protest to you, Madam, that it is shocking to me to displease you, but—'—'But! you put me out of all patience; I do not love to be thwarted. It is very strange,' continued she, in a tone of displeasure, 'that you should refuse me a trifle. The importance you give it teaches me to take care of myself in matters that are more serious.' At these words she quitted the room, leaving the philosopher confounded that so trifling an incident should destroy his hopes. 'Rose colour!' said he, 'rose-colour! how ridiculous! what a contrast! she will have it so; I must submit.' And the philosopher wrote for the ~~artistes~~.

'You are obeyed, Madam,' said he to Clarissa, accosting her. 'Has it cost you much?' demanded she, with a smile of disdain. 'A great deal, Madam, more than I can express: but, in short, you would have it so.' 'All the company admired the philosopher's head. Madam President, above all, swore by the great gods, that she had never seen any man's head so well dressed before. Aristus thanked her for so flattering a compliment. 'Compliments!' resumed she, 'compliments! I never make any. They are the false coin of the world.'—'Nothing was ever better conceived,' cried the sage: 'that deserves to be set down in writing.' They perceived that Madam President was now beginning the attack, and they left them to themselves. 'You think, then,' said she to him, 'that nobody but yourself can make sentences? I am a philosopher'

philosopher too, such as you see me.'—‘ You, Madam ! and of what sect ? A Stoick, or an Epicurean ?—‘ Oh, take my word for it ! the name is nothing. I have ten thousand crowns a year which I spend with gaiety ; I have good champagne which I drink with my friends, I enjoy a good state of health ; I do what I please, and leave every one to live after their own manner. There's a sect for you !’—‘ It is well done, and exactly what Epicurus taught.’—‘ Oh ! I declare to you I was taught nothing : all this comes of my own self. For these twenty years I have read nothing but the list of my wines, and the bill of fare of my supper.’—‘ Why, upon that footing you must be the happiest woman in the world.’—‘ Happy ! not entirely so : I want a husband of my own way of thinking. My president was a beast : good for nothing but the bar : he understood the law, and that was all. I want a man who knows how to love, and who would employ himself about me alone.’—‘ You may find a thousand, Madam.’—‘ Oh ! I want but one ; but I would have him be a good one. Birth, fortune, all that is perfectly indifferent to me ; I attach myself only to the man.’—‘ Indeed, Madam, you astonish me : you are the first woman ~~in wisdom~~ I have found any principles : but is it precisely a husband that you want ?’—‘ Yes, Sir, a husband who shall be mine in all forms. These lovers are all rogues, who deceive us, and who forsake us without leaving us room to complain : whereas a husband is ours in the face of the world ; and if mine should desert me, I should like to be able to go, with my title in my hand, and in all honour and honesty give an hundred slaps on the face to the insolent hussy that should have taken him from me.’—‘ Very good, Madam ! very good ! the right of property is an inviolable right. But do you know that there are very few souls like yours ? What courage, what vigour !’—‘ Oh, I have as much as a lioness. I know I am not handsome ; but ten thousand crowns a year made over on the wedding-day, are worth all the prettinesses of a Lucinda or Clarissa ; and though

love

love be rare in this age, one ought to have it for ten thousand crowns.' This conversation brought them back again to the house, at the very instant that word was brought that supper was ready.

Aristus appeared plunged into serious reflections; he weighed the advantages and inconveniences that might attend his marrying the lady president, and calculated how much longer a woman of fifty could live, swallowing every evening a bottle of Champagne. A dispute which arose between Madam de Ponval and Clarissa, drew him out of his reverie. Doris gave rise to the dispute. 'Is it possible,' said she, 'that Madam President should have been able to support for a whole hour a *tête-à-tête* with a philosopher; she who fills a yawning the moment one talks to her of reason!'

'Truly,' replied Madam de Ponval, 'it is because your reason has not common sense: ask this wise man, here, if mine be not good. We talked of the state that suits an honest woman, and he agrees with me, that a good husband is by much the best for her.'

~~'Oh, no!'~~ cried Clarissa, 'are we made to be slaves? and what becomes then of that freedom, which is the first of all ~~goods~~? Cleon declaimed against this system of freedom: he maintained, that the union of hearts was very different from a state of slavery. Madam President supported this opinion, and declared that she could perceive no distinction between the love of freedom, and the love of libertinism. 'May this glass of wine,' said she, 'be the last I shall drink, if I ever form the least dependence on any man who shall not first have taken an oath that he will be only mine. All the rest is but froth.'

---'And there now,' said Clarissa, 'is the great mortification of marriage. Love, with its freedom, loses all its delicacy. Is it not so, Sir?' demanded she of the philosopher. 'Why, Madam, I have thought as you do; yet it must be confessed that if freedom has its charms, it has also its dangers, its rocks: happy dispositions are so great a good, and inconstancy is so natural to man, that the moment

, he

feels a laudable inclination, he acts prudently in depriving himself of the fatal power of changing.'—' Do you hear him ladies? these men for my money! no flattery! this it what is called a philosopher. Try to seduce him if you can: for my part I retire quite charmed.—Adieu, philosopher, I want rest; I did not shut my eyes all last night, and I long to be asleep, in order to have the pleasure of dreaming.' She accompanied this adieu with an amorous glance, twinkling with champagne. 'Ladies,' said Lucinda, 'did you mind that look?'—' Surely,' replied Doris, 'she is distracted for Aristus; that is clear.'—' For me, Madam! you do not think so; our tastes, I believe, and our tempers, are not made for each other. I drink but little, I swear still less, and I do not love to be confined.'—' Ah, Sir, ten thousand crowns a year!'—' Ten thousand crowns a year, Madam, are an insult when mentioned to persons like myself.'

These words were repeated the next day to Madam the President. 'Oh! the insolent wretch!' said she, 'I am piqued: you shall see him at my feet.' I pass slightly over the nocturnal reflections of the sage Aristus. A good coach, a commodious apartment very far from my lady's, and the best cook in Paris; such was his plan in life. 'Our philosophers,' said he, 'perhaps will murmur a little. However, an ugly woman has in it something philosophical; at least, they will not suspect that I have pursued the pleasures of sensuality.'

The day of his triumph arrives, and the suit of rose-colour along with it: he views it, and blushes through vanity rather than shame. Cleon, however, came to see him, with the disturbed air of one possessed; and after having cast an eye of indignation on the preparations for his dressing; 'Sir,' said he to him, 'if I had to do with a man of the world, I should propose to him by way of preface, to exchange a thrust with me. But I am speaking to a philosopher, and I come to assault him with no other arms than frankness and virtue.'—' What is the matter then?'

then ?' demanded the sage, somewhat confounded at this preamble. ' I loved Clarissa, Sir,' replied Cleon ; ' she loved me ; we were going to be married. I know not what change is made all of a sudden in her soul, but she will not hear me speak any more either of marriage or of love. I had at first only some suspicions concerning the cause, but this rose-coloured suit confirms them. Rose-colour is her passion ; you adopted her colours : you are my rival.'—' I, Sir !'—' I cannot doubt it, and all the circumstances that attest it crowd on my imagination. Your secret walks, your whispers in the ear, looks and words that have escaped you, her hatred particularly against Madam de Ponval, every thing betrays you, every thing serves to open my eyes. Hear, then Sir, what I have to propose. One of us must give place : violence is an unjust method ; generosity will set us on good terms. I love, I idolize Clarissa ; I had been happy but for you ; I may still be so : my assiduities, time, and your absence, may bring her back to me. If, on the contrary, I must renounce her, you see one who will be driven to despair, and death will be my resource. Judge, Aristus, whether your situation be the same. Consult yourself, and answer me. If the happiness of your life depends on giving up your conquest to me, I require nothing, and I retire.'—' Go, Sir,' replied the philosopher to him with a serene air, ' you shall never overcome Aristus in a point of generosity ; and whatever it may cost me, I will prove to you that I merited this mark of esteem.'

' At last,' said he, when Cleon had left the room, ' here is an opportunity of shewing an heroical virtue. Ha, ha ! you gentlemen of the world, you will learn to admire us. . . . They will not know it, perhaps. . . . Oh, yes ; Clarissa will communicate it in confidence to her friends ; these will tell it again to others ; the adventure is uncommon enough to make a noise : the worst that can happen will be to publish it myself. It is necessary that a good deed should be known, and it matters not which way : our age has need of these

ples; they are lessons for mankind. . . . However let me not become a dupe to my own virtues, and dispossess myself of Clarissa before I am sure of Madam President. Let me see what champagne and sleep may have produced.'

While he reflected thus on his conduct, the philosopher dressed himself. The industrious Jasmin surpassed himself in dressing his head: the rose-coloured suit was put on before the looking-glass with a secret complacency, and the sige fellied out all radiant to visit Madam President, who received him with an exclamation of surprize. But passing all of a sudden from joy to confusion, 'I perceive,' said she, 'Clarissa's favourite colour; you are attentive to study her taste. Go, Aristus, go and avail yourself of the trouble you take to please her; it will, no doubt, have its reward.'—' My natural ingenuousness,' replied the philosopher, ' permits me not to conceal from you, that in the choice of this colour I have followed only her caprice. I will do more, Madam; I will confess that my first desire was to please in here yes. The wisest is not without weakness; and when a woman prejudices us by flattering attentions, it is difficult not to be touched with them; but how my attachment is weakened! I acknowledge it with reproach to myself, Madam, and you ought also reproach yourself for it.'—' Ah! philosopher, why is this not true? But this rose-colour confounds all my ideas.'—' Very well, Madam, I assumed it with regret; I now go to quit it with joy; and if my first simplicity....' 'No, stay, I think you charming. But what do I say? Ah, how happy are people in being so handsome! Aristus, why am I not beautiful!'—' What, Madam, do not you know that ugliness and beauty exist only in opinion? Nothing is handsome, nothing is ugly in itself. A beauty in one country is far from being reckoned a beauty in another; so many men, so many minds.'—' You flatter me,' said Madam President with a childish bashfulness, and pretending to blush; 'but I know, alas! but too well,

well, that I have nothing beautiful in me, except my soul.'---' Very well, and is not the supreme beauty the only charm worthy to touch the heart?'---' Ah! philosopher! believe me, that beauty alone has few charms.'---' It has few, no doubt, for the vulgar! but, to repeat it once more, you are not reduced to that. Is there nothing in a noble air, a commanding look, and an expressive countenance? and then, as to majesty, is she not the queen of the graces?'---' And for this plumpness of mine, what say you to that?'---' Ah, Madam! this plumpness, which is reckoned an excess among us, is a beauty in Asia. Do you think, for example, that the Turks have no skill in women? Well, then, all those elegant figures which we admire at Paris would not even be admitted into the Grand Signior's seraglio; and the Grand Signior is no fool. In a word, a rosy state of health is the mother of the pleasures, and plumpness is its symbol.'---' You will bring me presently to believe that my fat is not unbecoming. But for this nose of mine, nose without end, which runs out before my face.'---' Why, good God! what do you complain of? Were not the noses of the Roman matrons noses without end? Observe all the ancient busts.'---' But at least, they had not this great mouth, and such blubber-lips?'---' Thick lips, Madam, are the charme of the American beauties: they are, as it were, two cushions, on which soft and tender pleasure takes its repose. As to a wide mouth, I know nothing that gives the countenance more openness and gaiety.'---' True, when the teeth are fine; but unhappily---' Go to Siam, there fine teeth are vulgar, and it is a scandal even to have any. Thus all that is called beauty depends on the caprice of mankind, and the only real beauty is the object which has charmed us.'---' Shall I be yours, then, my dear philosopher?' demanded she, hiding her face behind her fan. 'Pardon me, Madam, if I hesitate. My delicacy renders me timid, and I profess a disinterestedness not yet sufficiently known to you to be above suspicion. You have

ralked to me of ten thousand crowns a year, and that circumstance makes me tremble.'—' Go, Sir, you are too just to impute to me such mean suspicions; it is Clarissa that detains you; I see your evasions; leave me.'—' Yes, I leave you, to go and acquit myself of the promise I have just made to Cleon. He was dismissed, he complained to me of it, and I have promised to engage Clarissa to give him her hand. Now, believe that I love her.'—' Is it possible? Oh, you charm me, and I cannot stand this sacrifice. Go and see her, I wait you here; do not let me languish: this very evening we will leave the country.'

'I wonder at myself,' said he as he was going off, 'for having the courage to marry her. She is frightful; but she is rich.' He comes to Clarissa, finds her at her toilette, and Cleon along with her, who assumes on seeing him, a dejected air. 'O! the handsome suit!' cried she. 'Come this way that I may see you. It is quite delicious, is it not, Cleon? It was my choice.'—' I see it plainly, Madam,' replied he, with a melancholy air. 'Let us leave off this trifling,' interrupted the philosopher; 'I am come to clear myself of a crime of which I am accused, and to fulfil a serious duty. Cleon loves you, you love him; he has lost your heart, he tells me, and that I am the cause of it.'—' Yes, Sir: and why all this mystery? I have just been making a declaration of it to him.'—' And I, Madam, declare to you that I will never make unhappy a worthy man, who merits you, and dies if he loses you. I love you as much as he can love you: it is a confession which I am not ashamed to make; but his inclination has been more rooted by the unconquerable force of habit than mine, and perhaps also I shall find in myself resources which he has not in himself.'—' O, the wonderful man,' cried Cleon, embracing the philosopher. 'What shall I say to you? You confound me.'—' There is no mighty matter in all this,' replied the philosopher with humility; 'your generosity set the example, I only imitate you.'—' Come, ladies,' said Clarissa

Clarissa to Lucinda and Doris, whom she saw appear at that instant, ‘ come and be witnesses of the triumph of philosophy. Arisus resigns me to his rival, and sacrifices his love for me to the happiness of a man he hardly knows.’ Their astonishment and admiration were acted up to the life; and Arisus, taking Clarissa’s hand, which he put into Cleon’s, snuffed up in abundance, with a supercilious modesty, the incense of adoration. ‘ Be happy,’ said he to them, ‘ and cease your astonishment at an effort which, however painful, carries its recompence along with it. What would a philosopher be, if virtue were not all in all with him?’ At these words he retired, as it were, to withdraw himself from his glory.

Madam President waited the philosopher’s coming. ‘ Is it done, then?’ demanded she of him. ‘ Yes, Madam, they are united; I am now my own and yours.’—‘ Oh, I triumph, you are mine; come here then that I may enchain you.’—‘ Ah, Madam!’ said he, falling at her knees, ‘ what dominion you have acquired over me! O Socrates! O Plato! what is become of your disciples? Do you yet know him in this state of debasement?’ While he spoke thus, Madam President took a rose-coloured ribbon, which she bound about the sage’s neck, and imitating Lucinda in the Oracle, with the most comical infantine air in the world, called him by the name of *Charmer*. ‘ Good Heaven! what would become of me if any body knew?—Ah, Madam,’ said he, ‘ let us fly, let us banish ourselves from a society that watches us; spare me the humiliation.’—‘ What is it you call humiliation? I must have you glory in their presence that you are mine, that you wear my chain.’ At these words the door opens, and Madam President rises from her chair, holding the philosopher in a string. ‘ See here,’ said she to the company, ‘ see here this proud man, who sighs at my feet for the beauty of my purse; I deliver him up to you, I have played my part.’ At this picture the roof resounded with the name of *Charmer*, and innumerable peals of

laughter. Aristus tearing his hair, and rending his clothes with rage, launched out into reproaches on the perfidy of women, and went off to compose a book against the age, in which he roundly asserted, that there was no sage but himself.

'THE BAD MOTHER.'

AMONG the monstrous productions of nature may be reckoned the heart of a mother who loves one of her children to the exclusion of all the rest. I do not mean an enlightened tenderness, which distinguishes among the young plants which it cultivates, that which yields the best returns to its early care; I speak of a blind fondness, frequently exclusive, sometimes jealous, which creates an idol and victims amid the little innocents brought into the world, for each of whom we are equally bound to soften the burdens of life. Of this error so common and so shameful to human nature, I am now going to give an example.

In one of the maritime provinces, M. de Carandon, an intendant, who had rendered himself respectable by his severity in repressing grievances, making it a principle to favour the weak and controul the strong, ruled poor, and almost insolvent. He had left behind him a daughter, whom nobody would marry, because she had much pride, little beauty, and no fortune. At last, a rich and honest merchant made his addresses to her, out of respect to the memory of her father. 'He has done us so many good offices,' said the worthy Corée, this was the merchant's name, 'it is but just that some of us should repay them to the daughter.' With these thoughts Corée offered himself in an humble manner; and Mademoiselle Carandon, with a great deal of reluctance, consented to give him her hand, on condition that she should maintain an absolute authority in his house. The good man's respect for the memory of the father extended even to the daughter; he consulted her as his oracle; and if at any time he happened to differ in opinion from her, she had nothing to do but to utter

utter these silencing expressions, ‘The late M. de Carandon, my father —.’ Corée never waited for her to conclude, before he confessed himself in the wrong.

He died rather young, and left her two children, of which she had condescended to permit him to be the father. On his death-bed he thought it his duty to regulate the partition of his effects; but M. de Carandon held it, as she told him, for a maxim, that in order to retain children under the dependence of a mother, it was necessary to render her the dispenser of their effects. This law was the rule of Corée’s will; and his inheritance was left in the hands of his wife, with the fatal right of distributing it to her children as she should think proper. Of these two children the eldest was her delight; not that he was handsomer, or of a more happy disposition, than the younger, but because she had run some danger of her life in bringing him into the world; he had first made her experience the pains and joy of child-bed, he had possessed himself of her tenderness, which he also seemed to have exhausted; she had, in short, all the bad reasons that a bad mother could have for loving only him.

Litté Jemmy was the rejected child: his mother hardly vouchsafed to see him, and never spoke to him but to chide him. The poor child, intimidated, durst not look up before her, nor answer her without trembling. He had, she said, his father’s disposition, a vulgar soul, and the air of such kind of folks.

As to the eldest, whom she had taken care to render as headstrong, disobedient, and humoursome as possible, he was gentility itself; his obstinacy was called greatness of spirit; his humours, excess of sensibility. She was delighted to see that he would never give up a point when he was in the right; and you must know that he was never in the wrong. She was eternally declaring that he knew his own good, and that he had the honour of resembling the sweet madam his mamma. This eldest boy, who was styled M. De l’Etang, (for it was not thought right to leave him the name of Corée) had

masters

masters of all sorts the lessons they set were for him alone, but little Jemmy reaped the fruits of them; insomuch, that at the end of a few years, Jemmy knew all that they had taught M. De l'Etang, who knew nothing at all.

The good women, who make a practice of attributing to children all the little wit they have themselves, and who ruminate all the morning on the pretty things they are to say in the day, had made the mother, whose weakness they were well acquainted with, believe that her eldest son was a prodigy. The masters, less complaisant, or less artful, while they complained of the indocility and inattention of this favourite, were boundless in their encomiums on Jemmy; they did not absolutely say that M. De l'Etang was a blockhead, but they said that little Jemmy had the genius of an angel. The mother's vanity was wounded; and out of an injustice, which one would not believe existed in nature, if this vice of mothers were less in fashion, she redoubled her aversion to the little wretch, became jealous of his improvement, and resolved to take away from her spoiled child the humiliation of a comparison.

A very affecting adventure awakened, however, in her, the sentiments of nature; but this retort upon herself only humbled, without correcting her. Jemmy was ten years of age, M. De l'Etang nearly fifteen, when she fell dangerously ill. The eldest employed himself about his pleasures, and very little about his mother's health. It is the punishment of foolish mothers to love unnatural children. However, she began to grow uneasy; Jemmy perceived it, and his little heart was seized with grief and fear: the impatience to see his mother grew too strong for him to conceal. They had accustomed him never to appear but when he was called; but at last his tenderness gave him courage. He seized the instant when the chamber door was half open, entered silent, and with trembling steps, and approached his mother's bed. 'Is it you, my son?' said she. 'No, mamma, it is Jemmy.' This natural and overwhelming answer

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penetrated with shame and grief the soul of this unjust woman; but a few carelessnesses from her bad son soon restored him to his full ascendancy; and Jemmy in the end was neither the better beloved, nor reckoned the more worthy to be so.

Scarce was Madam Corée recovered, when she resumed the design of banishing him her house; her pretence was, that M. De l'Etang, being naturally lively, was too susceptible of dissipation to have a companion in his studies; and the impertinent prepossessions of the masters for the child, who was the most humble and tawnying with them, might easily discourage the other, whose spirit being higher, and less tractable, required more management: it was her pleasure, therefore, that L'Etang should be the only object of their cares, and she got rid of the unfortunate Jemmy by exiling him to a college.

At sixteen L'Etang quitted his masters in the mathematics, physics, music, &c. just as he had taken them: he began his exercise, which he performed much in the same manner as he had done his studies; and at twenty he appeared in the world with the self-sufficiency of a coxcomb, who has heard of every thing, but reflected on nothing.

Jemmy, on his part, had gone through his studies; and his mother was quite wearied with the commendations they gave him. ‘ Well then,’ said she, ‘ since he is so wise, he will succeed in the church; he has nothing to do but to take to that course of life.’

Unfortunately, Jemmy had no inclination for the ecclesiastic state; he came therefore to entreat his mother to dispense with his entering into it. ‘ You imagine, then,’ laid she to him, with a cold and severe air, ‘ that I have enough to maintain you in the world? I assure you I have not. Your father’s fortune was not so considerable as was imagined; it will scarce be sufficient to settle your elder brother. For your part, you have only to consider whether you will run the career of benefices or of arms; whether you will have your head shaven or broken.

broken. In short whether you will take a band, or a lieutenancy of infantry : this is all that I can do for you.' Jemmy answered with respect, that there were less violent courses to be taken by the son of a merchant. At these words Mad. de Catandon was near dying with grief, for having brought into the world a son so unworthy of her, and forbid him her sight. Young Corée, distressed at having incurred his mother's anger, retired sighing, and resolved to try whether fortune would be less cruel to him than nature. He learned that a vessel was on the point of sailing for the Antilles, whither he had a design of repairing. He went to his mother to ask her consent, her blessing, and a parcel of goods. The two first articles were amply granted him, but the latter very sparingly.

His mother, too happy in being rid of him, wanted to see him before his departure, and, while she embraced him, bestowed on him a few tears. His brother also had the goodness to wish him a good voyage. These were the first caresses he had ever received from his relations : his sensible heart was penetrated with them — yet he durst not ask them to write to him ; but he had a fellow collegian by whom he was tenderly beloved, and he conjured him at parting, now and then to send him news of his mother.

She was now only employed in the care of settling her favourite son. He declared for the robe ; they obtained him a dispensation from its studies ; and he was soon admitted into the sanctuary of the laws. Nothing remained wanting but an advantageous marriage ; they proposed a rich heiress : but they required of the widow the settlement of her fortune. She had the weakness to consent to it, scarce reserving to herself sufficient to live decently ; well assured that her son's fortune would be always at her disposal.

At the age of twenty-five, M. De l'Etang found himself a dapper little counsellor, neglecting his wife as much as his mother, taking great care of his own person, and paying very little regard to the bar. As
it

it was genteel for a husband to have somebody besides his wife, L'Etang thought it his duty to set up for a man of intrigue. A young girl, whom he ogled at the play, returned his invitations, received him at her lodgings with a great deal of politeness, told him he was charming, which he very readily believed, and in a short time eased him of a pocket-book with ten thousand crowns. But as there is no such thing as eternal love, this perjured beauty quitted him at the expiration of three months for a young English lord, equally foolish, and more magnificent. L'Etang, who could not conceive how they could dismiss such a person as himself, resolved to avenge himself by taking a mistress still more celebrated, and loading her with favours. His new conquest raised him a thousand rivals; and when he compared himself with a crowd of adorers, who sighed for her in vain, he had the pleasure of thinking himself more amiable, as he found himself more happy. However, having perceived that he was not without uneasiness, she was desirous of convincing him, that there was nothing in the world which she was not resolved to quit for him, and proposed, for the sake of avoiding impatience, that they should go together to Paris, to forget all the world, and live only for each other. L'Etang was transported at this mark of tenderness. Every thing is got ready for the journey; they set out, they arrive, and chuse their retreat in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal. Fatima (that was the name of the beauty) asked and obtained, without difficulty, a coach to take the air. L'Etang was surprised at the number of friends he found in this good city. These friends had never seen him, but his merit attracted them in crowds. Fatima received none but L'Etang's company, and he was always very sure of his friends and of her. This charming woman, had, however, one weakness; she believed in dreams. One night she had one, which could not, she said, be effaced from her memory. L'Etang wanted to know this dream which engrossed her attention so seriously.

‘I dreamed,’

' I dreamed,' said she, ' that I was in a delicious apartment. In it was a damask bed of three different colours, with tapestry and scphas suited to this superb bed ; pannels dazzling with gold, polished cabinets, porcelaine of Japan, China monkies, the prettiest in the world : but all this was nothing. A toilette was ready set out ; I drew near to it ; what did I see ? My heart beats at it : a casket of diamonds ; and what diamonds ! the most beautiful aigrette, the finest ear-rings, the handlowest esclavage, and a river without end. I am sure, Sir, something very extraordinary will happen to me. This dream has affected me very strongly, and my dreams never deceive me.'

It was in vain that M. De l'Etang employed all his eloquence to persuade her that dreams signified nothing ; she maintained that this dream did signify something ; and, at length, he feared lest some of his rivals should propose to realize it. He was under a necessity, therefore, of capitulating ; and, except in some few circumstances, resolved to accomplish it himself. We may easily judge, that this experiment did not cure her of dreaming ; she took a delight in it, and dreamed so often, that even the fortune of good Master ~~Cotte~~ became hardly any thing more than a dream. M. De L'Etang's young wife, to whom this journey had not been very agreeable, demanded to be separated from the fortunes of a husband who abandoned her ; and her portion, which he was obliged to restore, put him still less at his ease.

Play is a resource. L'Etang pretended to excel at piquet ; his friends, who made up a common purse, all betted for him, while one of them played against him. Every time that he threw out, ' Faith,' said one of the betters, ' that is well played ! '—' There is no playing better,' said another. In short, M. De l'Etang played the best in the world, but he never had the aces. While they insensibly stripped him, the faithful Fatima, who perceived his decline, dreamed one night that she quitted him, and left him the next day ; however, as it is mortifying

tifying to fall off, he piqued himself upon his honour, and would not abate any thing of his grandeur, so that in a few years he was ruined.

He was now at his last shifts, when the good lady his mother, who had not managed her own reserve better, wrote to him to desire some money. He returned her answer, that he was very sorry; but that, far from being able to send her any relief, he stood in need of it himself. The alarm was already spread among their creditors, and the question was, who should first seize the ruins of their fortune----‘What have I done,’ said the distracted mother; ‘I have stripped myself of all for a son who has squandered every thing.’

In the mean time, what became of the unfortunate Jemmy?—Jemmy, with a good understanding, the best heart, the handsomest figure in the world, and his little venture, was happily arrived at St. Domingo. It is well known how easy a Frenchman of good morals, and a good person, finds it to establish himself in the isles. The name of Corée, his own good sense and prudence, soon acquired him the confidence of the inhabitants. With the assistances that were offered him, he purchased himself a settlement, cultivated it, and rendered it flourishing; trade, which was then very brisk, enriched him in a short time, and in the space of five years he was become the object of the jealousy of the handsomest and richest widows and damsels of the colony. But, alas! his fellow-collegian, who till that time had given him none but the most satisfactory news, now sent him word that his brother was ruined, and that his mother abandoned by every body, was driven to the most dreadful extremities. This fatal letter was bedewed with tears. ‘Ah, my poor mother,’ cried he, ‘I will fly to your relief.’ He would not trust his charge to any body. Accident, infidelity, neglect, or delay, might deprive her of the assistance sent by her son, and leave her to perish in indigence and despair. ‘Nothing fought to detain a son,’ said he to himself, when the honour and life of a mother are at stake.’

With these sentiments Corée was only employed in the care of rendering his riches portable. He sold all his possessions, and this sacrifice cost him nothing ; but he could not but feel some regret for a more precious treasure which he left in America. Lucella, the young widow of an old colonist, who had left her immense riches, had cast upon Corée one of those looks which seem to penetrate to the bottom of the soul, and to unravel its character ; one of those looks which decide the opinion, determine the inclination, and the sudden and confused effect of which is generally taken for a sympathetic emotion. She had imagined she saw this young man every thing that could render a virtuous and sensible woman happy ; and her love for him had not waited for reflection to give it birth and discover itself. Corée, on his side, had distinguished her among her rivals, as the most worthy of captivating the heart of a wise and virtuous man. Lucella, with a figure the most noble and interesting ; an air the most animated, and yet the most modest ; a brown complexion, but fresher than the rose ; hair of the blackness of the ebony, and teeth of a dazzling whiteness and enamel ; the stature and gait of one of Diana's nymphs ; the smile and look of the companions of Venus ; Lucella, with all these charms, was endowed with that greatness of spirit, that loftiness of temper, that justness in her ideas, that rectitude in her sentiments, which makes us say, though not with the greatest propriety, that such a woman has the soul of a man. It was not one of Lucella's principles to be ashamed of a virtuous inclination. Scarce had Corée confessed to her the choice of his heart, when he obtained from her, without evasion, a like confession, by way of reply ; and their mutual inclination becoming more tender, in proportion as it became more considered, now wanted nothing but to be consecrated at the altar. Some disputes, concerning the inheritance of Lucella's husband, had retarded their happiness. These disputes were on the point of being settled, when the letter from Corée

Corée's friend arrived, to tear him all at once from what he held dearest in the world except his mother. He repaired to the beauteous widow's, shewed her the letter from his friend, and asked her advice. 'I flatter myself,' said she, 'that you have no need of it. Convert your wealth into mercantile commodities, hasten to the relief of your mother, pay your respects to all your friends, and come back again: my fortune awaits you. If I die, my will shall secure it to you; if I live, instead of a will, you know what right you will have over it.' Corée, struck with gratitude and admiration, seized the hands of this generous woman, and bathed them with his tears; but as he was launching out in encomiums on her, 'Go,' said she to him, 'you are a child; entertain not the prejudices of Europe. The moment a woman does any thing tolerably handsome, they cry her up as a prodigy, as if Nature had not given us a soul. Should you, in my place, now, be much pleased to see me in astonishment, and viewing you, as a phenomenon, the pure emotion of a good heart?'---'Pardon me,' said Corée, 'I ought to have expected it? but your principles, your sentiments, the ease, the simplicity of your virtues, enchant me: I admire them without being amazed at them.'---'Go, my dear,' said she to him, saluting him; 'I am thine, such as God has made me. Do your duty, and return as soon as possible.'

He embarks, and with him he embarks all his fortune. The passage was pretty favourable till they came towards the Canaries; but there, their vessel, pursued by a corsair from Morocco, was obliged to seek for safety in its tails. The corsair which chased them was on the point of joining them; and the captain, terrified at the danger of being boarded, was going to strike to the pirate. 'Oh, my dear mother!' cried Corée, embracing the casket in which were contained all his hopes, and then tearing his hair with grief and rage. 'No,' said he, 'this barbarous African shall have my heart first.' Then addressing himself to the

captain, the crew, and the affrighted passengers, ‘ What ! my friends,’ said he, ‘ shall we surrender ourselves like cowards ? Shall we suffer this robber to carry us to Morocco, loaded with irons ; and to sell us like beasts ? Are we disarmed ? Are the people on board the enemy’s ship invulnerable ; or are they braver than we ? They want to board us ; let them ! what then ? we shall have them the nearer.’ His courage reanimated their spirits ; and the captain, embracing him, extolled him for having set the example. Every thing is now got ready for defence ; the corsair boards them ; the vessels dash against each other : death flies on both sides. In a short time the two ships are covered with a cloud of smoke and fire. The cannonade ceases ; day-light appears, and the sword singles out its victims. Corée, sabre in hand, made a dreadful slaughter. The moment he saw an African throw himself on board, he ran up to him, and cleaved him in two, crying out, ‘ Oh, my poor mother !’ His fury was as that of the lioness defending her little ones ; it was the last effort of nature in despair : and the gentlest, the most sensible heart that ever existed, was now become the most violent and bloody. The captain discerned him every where, his eye flashing fire and his arm drenched in blood. ‘ This is not a mortal,’ said he to his companions, ‘ it is a god who fights for us !’ His example kindled their courage. He finds himself at length hand to hand with the chief of the barbarians. ‘ My God !’ cried he, ‘ have pity on my mother !’ and at these words, with a back-handed blow, he let out the pirate’s bowels. From this moment the victory was decisive : the few who were left of the crew of the corsair begged their lives, and were put in irons. Corée’s vessel, with her booty, arrives at length on the coast of France ; and this worthy son, without allowing himself one night’s repose, repairs with his treasure to his unhappy mother. He finds her on the brink of the grave, and in a state more dreadful than death itself ; stripped of all relief, and in the care of one man-servant, who disgusted at suffering the

the indigence to which she was reduced, paid her, with regret, the last duties of an humiliating pity. The shame of her situation had induced her to forbid this servant from admitting any person, except the priest and the charitable physician who sometimes visited her. Coree asks to see her, and is refused.

‘ Tell my name,’ said he to the servant. ‘ And what is your name?’—‘ Jemmy.’ The servant approaches the bed. ‘ A stranger,’ says he, ‘ asks to see you, Madam.’—‘ Alas! and who is this stranger?’—‘ He says that his name is Jemmy.’ At this name her heart was so violently agitated, that she was near expiring. ‘ Ah! my son,’ said she, with a faint voice, and lifting upon him her dying eye-lids. ‘ Ah! my son, at what a moment are you returned to see your mother! Your hand will soon close her eyes.’ What was the grief of this pious and tender child, to see that mother whom he had left in the bosom of luxury and opulence, to see her now in a bed surrounded with rags, the very description of which would make the stomach rise, if it were permitted me to give it. ‘ Oh, my mother,’ cried he, throwing himself upon this bed of woe; his sobs choaked his voice, and the rivers of tears with which he bathed the bosom of his expiring mother, were for a long time the only expression of his grief and love. ‘ Heaven punishes me,’ replied she, ‘ for having loved too much an unnatural son; for having---’ He interrupted her: ‘ All is atoned for, my dear mother,’ said this virtuous young man; ‘ live: Fortune has loaded me with her favours; I come to pour them into the lap of Nature; it is for you that they are given me. Live! I have enough to make you love life.’—‘ Ah! my dear child, if I have any desire to live, it is to expiate my injustice; it is to love a son of whom I was not worthy; a son whom I have deprived of his inheritance.’ At these words she covered her face, as unworthy to see the light. ‘ Ah, Madam!’ cried he, pressing her in his arms, ‘ deprive me not of the sight of my mother. I am come across the seas to seek and relieve her!’ At

this instant arrive the priest and physician. ‘ See there,’ said she, ‘ my child, the only comforters that Heaven has left me: without their charity I should now be no more.’ Corée embraces them, bursting into tears. ‘ My friends! ’ says he to them; ‘ my benefactors! what do I not owe you! but for you I should no longer have had a mother: go on, recall her to life. I am rich; I am come to make her happy. Redouble your cares, your consolations, your assistances: restore her to me.’ The physician prudently saw that this situation was too violent for the sick lady. ‘ Go, Sir,’ said he to Corée; ‘ trust in our zeal, and think of nothing but to provide her a convenient and wholesome lodging; to which the lady shall this evening be removed.’

Change of air, proper nourishment, or rather the revolution created by joy, and the calm which succeeded it, insensibly reanimated the organs of life. A profound chagrin had been the ground of the disease; consolation was the remedy. Corée learned that his unhappy brother had just perished in misery. I draw a veil over the frightful picture of his death, which he had but too justly merited. They kept the knowledge of it from a feeling mother, who was as yet too weak to support, without expiring, a new attack of grief. She learned it at last, when her health was better established. All the wounds of her heart were now opened afresh, and the maternal tears trickled from her eyes. But Heaven, while it took away from her a son unworthy of her tenderness, restored her one who had merited it by every sensible and touching tie of nature and virtue. He confided to her the desires of his soul; which were to embrace at once his mother and his wife. Madam Corée seized with joy the opportunity of going over with her son to America. A city, filled with her follies and misfortunes, was to her an odious place of residence; and the moment in which she embarked restored her a new life. Heaven, which protects piety, granted them a favourable passage. Lucella received the mother

of her lover as she would have received her own. Hymen made of these lovers the happiest couple, and their days still roll on in that unalterable peace, in those pure and serene pleasures, which are the portion of virtue.

THE GOOD MOTHER.

THE care of a mother for her children is of all duties the most religiously observed. This universal sentiment governs all the passions; it prevails even over the love of life. It renders the fiercest of animals sensible and gentle, the most sluggish indefatigable, the most timid courageous to excel: not one of them loses sight of its little ones, till the moment that their care becomes useless. We see only among mankind the odious examples of a too early desertion.

In the midst of a world, where vice, ingenious to disguise itself, takes a thousand seducing forms; it is there, above all, that the most happy disposition requires to be enlightened without ceasing. The more shelves there are, and the more they are hidden, the more need has the frail bark of innocence and happiness of a prudent pilot. What would have been, for example, the fate of Miss Troëne, if Heaven had not made expressly for her a mother, who was one of ten thousand.

This respectable widow had devoted to the education of an only daughter the most agreeable years of her life. These were her reflections at the age of five and twenty.

'I have lost my husband,' said she; 'I have nothing but my daughter and myself: shall I live for myself, or shall I live for her? The world smiles upon me, and pleases me still: but if I give myself up to it, I abandon my daughter, and hazard her happiness and my own. Suppose that a life of noise and dissipation has all the charms that are attributed to it, how long may I be able to taste them? How few of my years, which are rolling on, have I to pass in the world? how many in solitude and the bosom of my child? The world

world which invites me now, will dismiss me soon without pity; and if my daughter should forget herself, according to my example; if she is unhappy through my negligence, what will be my comfort? Let me in good time add grace to my retreat; let me render it as agreeable as it is honourable; and let me sacrifice to my daughter, who is every thing to me, that alien multitude, to whom in a short time I shall be nothing.'

From that moment this prudent mother became the friend and companion of her daughter. But to obtain her confidence was not the work of a day.

Emily (that was the young lady's name) had received from Nature a soul susceptible of the most lively impressions; and her mother, who studied & incessantly, experienced an uneasy joy on perceiving this sensibility, which does so much harm and so much good. 'Happy,' said she sometimes, 'happy the husband whom she will love, if he is deserving of her tenderness; if by esteem and friendship he knows how to render dear to her the cares she shall take to please him; but woe to him, if he humbles and shocks her: Her wounded delicacy will be the torment of them both. I see that if a reproach escapes even me, a slight complaint which she has not merited, tears of grief trickle from her eyes; her drooping heart is dispirited. Nothing is easier than to soothe her, nothing easier than to frighten her.'

Temperate as was the life of Madam Du Troëne, it was however conformable to her condition, and relative to the design she had of instructing herself at leisure in the choice of a husband worthy of Emily. A crowd of admirers, caught with the charms of the daughter, paid, according to custom, assiduous court to the mother. Of this number was the Marquis de Verglan, who, to his own misfortune, was endowed with a very handsome figure. His glass and the ladies had so often told him so, that he could not but believe it. He listened to them with pleasure, contemplated himself with delight, smiled upon himself, and was eternally

nally singing his own praises. Nothing could be objected to his politeness; but it was so cold, and so slight, in comparison to the attentions with which he honoured himself, that one might clearly perceive that he possessed the first place in his own esteem. He would have had, without thinking on them, all the graces of Nature: he spoiled them all by affecting them. In regard to understanding, he wanted only justness, or rather reflection. Nobody would have talked better than he, if he had known what he was going to say; but it was his first care to be of an opinion contrary to that of another. Right or wrong was all one to him; he was sure of dazzling, of seducing, of persuading to whatever he would. He knew by heart all that little toilette chit-chat, all those pretty things which mean nothing. He was thoroughly versed in all the love-anecdotes of the city and court: who was the gallant of yesterday, who of to-day, who of the morrow, and how many times in the year such and such a lady had changed her admirers. He even knew a certain person who had refused to be upon the list, and who would have supplanted all his rivals, if he had chosen to give himself the trouble.

This young coxcomb was the son of an old friend of M. Du Troëne, and the widow spoke of him to her daughter with a kind of compassion. ‘It is a pity,’ said she, ‘that they spoil this young man! He is of a good family, and might have succeeded.’ He had already succeeded but too well in the heart of Emily. ‘That which is ridiculous in the eyes of a mother, is not always so in the eyes of a daughter. Youth is indulgent to youth; and there are such things as beautiful defects.

Verglan, on his side, thought Emily tolerably handsome, only a little too plain and simple; but that might be corrected. He took but very little care to please her; but when the first impression is made, every thing contributes to sink it deeper. The very dissipation of this young fop was a new attraction to Emily,

as

as it threatened her with the danger of losing him ; and nothing hinders, so much as jealousy, the progress of a growing love.

In ~~§~~ is an account of his ~~l~~ Madam Du Troëne, Verglan represented himself (as to be sure he ought) the most desirable man in the world.

Madam Du Troëne dropped a hint concerning modesty : but he protested that nobody was less vain than himself ; that he knew perfectly well that it was not for his own sake that they sought him ; that his birth did a great deal, and that he owed the rest to his wit and figure, qualities which he had not given himself, and which he was far from being proud of.

The more pleasure Emily felt in seeing and hearing him, the more care she took to conceal it. A reproach from her mother would have touched her to the heart ; and this delicate sensibility rendered her fearful to excess.

In the mean time, Emily's charms, with which Verglan was so faintly touched, had inspired the discreet and modest Belzors with the tenderest passion. A just way of thinking, and an upright heart, formed the basis of his character. His agreeable and open figure was still more ennobled by the high idea that was conceived of his soul ; for we are naturally disposed to seek, and believe that we discover, in the features of a man, what we know to be in his heart.

Belzors, in whom nature had been directed to virtue from his infancy, enjoyed the inestimable advantage of being able to give himself up to it without precaution and constraint. Decency, honesty, candour, a frankness which gains confidence, together with a severity of manners which creates respect, had in him the free ease of habit. An enemy to vice, without pride ; indulgent to follies, without contracting any ; complying with innocent customs ; incorruptible by bad examples ; he swam upon the torrent of the world ; beloved, respected, even by those to whom his life was a reproach, and to whom the public esteem delighted to oppose it, in order to humble their pride.

Madam

Madam Du Troëne, charmed with the character of this young man, had secretly pitched upon him as the most deserving husband she could give her daughter. She was inexhaustible in his commendations; and while Emily applauded with the modesty of her age, Madam Du Troëne mistook the ingenuous and agreeable air which her daughter assumed towards him: for, as the esteem with which Belzors inspired her was not mingled with any sentiment that she needed to conceal, Emily was quite at her ease.

It were to be wished, that she had been as free and as tranquil with the dangerous Verglan; though the painful situation in which his presence cast her, had in good measure the appearance of spleen. If Madam Du Troëne spoke in commendation of him, Emily looked down, and kept silence. ‘ You do not seem to me, daughter,’ said Madam Du Troëne, ‘ to relish those light and shining graces, on which the world lays so much stress.’ —‘ I know nothing at all of them!’ said Emily, blushing. The good mother concealed her joy: she thought she saw the plain and modest virtues of Belzors triumphing in Emily’s heart over the little brilliant vices of Verglan, and those of his character; till an accident, slight in appearance, but striking to an attentive and discerning mother, drew her out of this illusion.

One of Emily’s accomplishments was drawing. She had chosen the delineation of flowers, as the most suitable to her age: for what can be more natural than to see a rose blow beneath the hand of beauty; Verglan, by a taste somewhat resembling hers, was passionately fond of flowers; and he never appeared without a nosegay, the prettiest in the world.

One day Madam Du Troëne’s eyes were thrown casually on Verglan’s nosegay. The day after, she perceived that Emily, perhaps without thinking of it, was drawing the flowers of it. It was natural enough, that the flowers she had seen the evening before should be still present to her imagination, and come, as it were,

were, of their own accord, to offer themselves to her pencil; but that which was not quite so natural, was the air of enthusiasm which she betrayed in drawing them. Her eyes sparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth smiled amorously at every stroke of the pencil, and a colour more animated than that of the flowers which she was endeavouring to delineate, diffused itself over her cheeks. ‘Are you pleased with your execution?’ said the mother to her carelessly. ‘It is impossible,’ replied Emily, ‘to represent nature well, when we have her not before our eyes.’ It was certain, however, that she had never copied her more faithfully.

Some few days after, Verglan came again with new flowers. Madam Du Troëne, without any particularity, observed them, one after another; and, in Emily’s next lesson, Verglan’s nosegay was drawn again. The good mother continued her observations, and every trial confirming her suspicions, redoubled her uneasiness. ‘After all,’ said she, ‘I am alarmed, perhaps, at somewhat very innocent. Let me see, however, if she has any meaning in all this.’

The studies and accomplishments of Emily were a secret to her mother’s acquaintance. As she had only intended to make her relish solitude, and preserve her imagination from the dangers of meditation, and the tediousness of idleness, Madam Du Troëne derived neither to herself nor daughter the least vanity from those talents which she had cultivated with so much care. But one day when they were alone with Belzors, and the conversation turned on the great advantage of employing and amusing one’s self; ‘My daughter,’ said Madam Du Troëne, ‘has created herself an amusement, which she relishes more and more. I want to have you see some of her designs.’ Emily opened her port-folio; and Belzors, charmed, was never weary of admiration of her performances. ‘How soft and pure,’ said he, ‘are the pleasures of innocence! In vain does vice torment itself, it will never taste the like.

like. Is it not true, Madam, that the hour of labour passes away quick? And yet you have fixed it: see it here retraced and produced anew to your eyes. Time is never lost but to the idle.' Madam Du Troëne listened with a secret complacency. Emily thought his observations very sensible, but was not in the least touched by them.

Some days after, Verglan came to see them. 'Do you know, Sir,' says Madam Du Troëne, 'that my daughter has received the highest encomiums from Belzors on her talent for drawing? I want your opinion of it.' Emily, in confusion, blushed, hesitated, said that she had nothing finished by her, and beseeched her mother to wait till she should have some piece fit to be seen. She did not doubt but her mother was laying a snare for her. 'Since there is a mystery in this, there is also a design,' said this discerning mother within herself: 'she is afraid that Verglan may know his own flowers, and penetrate into the secret motive of the pleasure she has taken in drawing them. My daughter loves this young fop; my fears were but too well founded.'

Madam Du Troëne, solicited on all sides, excused herself still on account of Emily's youth, and the resolution she had taken not to constrain her in her choice. However, this choice alarmed her. 'My daughter,' said she, 'is going to prefer Verglan; there is, at least, room to think so: and this young man has every quality that can render a woman unhappy. If I declare my will to Emily, if I only suffer her to have the slightest perception of it, she will make it a law to subscribe to it without murmuring; she will marry a man whom she does not love, and the remembrance of the man she loves will haunt her even in the arms of another. I know her soul; she will become the victim of her duty. But shall I ordain this grievous sacrifice? God forbid! No: let her own inclination decide it; but I may direct her inclination by enlightening it, and that is the only lawful use of the authority that is

given me. I am certain of the goodness of heart, of the justness of my daughter's sentiments; let me supply, by the light natural to my years, the inexperience of hers; let her see by her mother's eyes, and fancy, if possible, that she consults only her own inclination.'

Every time that Verglan and Belzors met together at Madam Du Troëne's, she turned the conversation on the manners, customs, and maxims of the world. She encouraged contradiction; and without taking any side, gave their dispositions room to display themselves. Those little adventures with which society abounds, and which entertain the idle curiosity of the circles at Paris, most commonly furnished matter for their reflections. Verglan, light, decisive, and lively, was constantly on the side of the fashion. Belzors, in a modest tone, constantly defended the cause of morality with a noble freedom.

The arrangement of Count D'Auberive with his lady was at that time the town-talk. It was said, that after a pretty brisk quarrel, and bitter complaints on both sides, on the subject of their mutual infidelity, they agreed, that they owed each other nothing; that they had concluded by laughing at the folly of being jealous without loving; that D'Auberive had consented to see the Chevalier De Clange make love to his wife; and that she had promised, on her side, to receive with the greatest politeness the Marchioness De Talbe, to whom D'Auberive paid his court; that the peace had been ratified by a supper, and that two couples of lovers never maintained a better understanding with each other.

At this recital Verglan cried out, that nothing was wiser. 'They talk of the good old times,' said he; 'let them produce an instance of the manners of our forefathers comparable to this. Formerly an instance of infidelity set a family in flames; they shut up, they beat their wives. If the husband made use of the liberty that was reserved to him, his sad and faithful half was obliged to put up with the injury, and vent her

her moans at home, as in an obscure prison. If she imitated her wandering husband, it was with terrible risks. Nothing less than her lover's and her own life were at stake. They had the folly to attach the honour of the man to the virtue of his wife; and the husband, who was not the less a fine gentleman for intriguing elsewhere himself, became the ridiculous object of public contempt on the first fatal step of his lady. Upon honour, I do not conceive how, in these barbarous ages, they had the courage to marry. The bands of Hymen were then downright chains. Now-a-days, complaisance, freedom, peace, reign in the bosom of families. If the married pair love one another, so much the better; they live together, they are happy. If they cease to love, they tell it like well-bred persons, and dispense with each other's promise of fidelity. They give over being lovers, and become friends. These are what I call social manners, free and easy. This makes one long to be married.'—' You find it then quite easy,' said Madam Du Troëne, ' for a wife to be the confidante of her husband, and for him to be the complaisant friend of his wife?'—' To be sure; provided it be mutual. Is it not just to grant our confidence to those who honour us with theirs, and to render each other by turns the offices of friendship? Can a man have a better friend than his wife, or the wife a surer and more intimate friend than her husband? With whom shall we be free, if not with the person, who, from situation is one with us? And when unfortunately we no longer find any pleasure at home, what can be better than to seek it abroad, to return each at their own time, without jealousy and restraint?'

' Nothing is more pleasant,' said Belzors, ' than this new method; but you and I have a great deal of ground to go over before we can relish it. In the first place, we must give up all love for ourselves, wife, and children; we must be able to accustom ourselves to consider, without repugnance, as being one half of one's self, somebody whom we despise sufficiently, to

deliver up——' ‘ Well,’ replied Verglan, ‘ what but mere prejudices are all these scruples! what hinders us from esteeming one another, if it be settled that there is no longer any scandal in it?’—‘ When that is settled,’ said Belzors, ‘ all the ties of society are broken. The inviolable sanctity of the marriage-tie forms the sanctity of all the ties of nature. Remember, my friend, that if there are no longer any sacred duties for the parents, there will no longer be any for the children. All these conditions depend on each other. Family quarrels were violent in the days of our fathers; but the malice of morals was sound, and the wound soon closed up again. At present it is a languishing body, wasting by a slow poison. On the other side, thy dear Verglan, we have not now the idea of those pure and intimate pleasures which the married pair felt amidst their family; nor of that union which formed the delight of their youth, and the consolation of their advanced years. Now-a-days, when a mother is afflicted at the dissipations of her son, or a father overwhelmed with any reverse of fortune, are they a refuge or support to each other? They are obliged to unbosom their grief abroad; and the consolation of strangers is very weak indeed.’

‘ You talk like an oracle, my sage Belzors,’ said Verglan; ‘ but who has told you that two married persons would not do best to love, and to be faithful to each other all their lives? I am only, if unfortunately this mutual liking should cease, for their consoling each other, and settling matters amicably, without forbidding those who may have loved reciprocally from the times of our fathers, to love on still, if their hearts incline them to it.’—‘ Aye,’ said Madam Du Troëne, ‘ what is there to hinder them?’—‘ What is there to hinder them, Madam?’ replied Belzors. ‘ Custom, example, the *bon ton*, the facility of living, without shame according to their liking. Verglan will agree, that the life led in the world is agreeable! and change is naturally pleasing: our very weakness invites

us to it. Who, then, will resist this inclination, if they take off the curb of morality?'---' I! I take off nothing,' said Verglan, 'but I am for every body's living according to their liking; and I very much approve of the course that D'Auberive and his lady have taken to overlook on both sides what are called injuries. If they are satisfied, every body else ought to be so too.'

As he finished these last words, a servant announced the Marquis D'Auberive. 'Ah, Marquis! you come very opportunely,' said Verglan: 'tell us, prythee, if your story be true. They say that your lady forgives you your hubarb, and that you pass by her sena.'---' Psha! what stuff!' said D'Auberive to him carelessly. ---' I have maintained that nothing was more reasonable; but Belzors there condemns you without appeal.'---' Why so, pray? Would not he have done as much? My wife is young and handsome: a coquette; that is quite evident. At the bottom, however, I believe her to be very virtuous; but though she should err a little, justice ought to take place. I conceive, however, that a person more jealous than myself may condemn me; but what astonishes me is, that Belzors should be the first. I have hitherto received nothing but commendations. Nothing is more natural than my proceeding; and all the world felicitate me upon it as on something marvellous. It looks as if they did not think I had understanding enough to take a reasonable step. Upon honour I am quite confounded at the compliments I receive on it. As to the rigid gentlemen I honour them sufficiently; but I live for myself. Let every one do as much, and the happiest will always be the wisest.'---' Well, how is the marchioness?' said Madam de Troëne to him, with a design of changing the subject. ' Wonderfully well, Madam; we supped together last night, and I never saw her in such good-humour.'---' I will lay a wager,' says Verglan, 'that you will take her again some day.'---' Faith, very possible: for

but yesterday when we got up from table, I caught myself saying tender things to her.'

This first experiment made the most lively impression on Emily's understanding. Her mother, who perceived it, gave free course to her reflections; but in order to put her into the way, 'It is wonderful,' said she, 'how much opinions depend upon tempers. Here, now, these two young men, educated with the same care, both endued with the same principles of honesty and virtue; observe, however, how they differ from one another! and each of them believes he is in the right.' Emily's heart did its best to excuse in Verglan the fault of having defended the manners of the age. 'With what levity,' said she, 'do they treat society and fidelity! how they sport with what is most sacred in nature! and Verglan gives little irregularities! Why has he not the soul of Belzors!'

Some time after, Emily and her mother being at the play, Belzors and Verglan presented themselves at their box, and Madam Du Troëne invited them both to take their seats there. The play was Ines*. The scene of the children gave Verglan an opportunity of uttering some *bon mots*, which he put off as excellent criticisms. Belzors, without listening to him, melted into tears, and took no pains to conceal it. His rival rallied him on his weakness. 'What,' said he to him, 'do children make you cry?'---'And what would you have me be affected by?' said Belzors. 'Yes, I confess, I never hear, without much emotion, the tender names of father and mother; the pathos of Nature penetrates me; even the most touching love interests me, moves me much less.' Ines was followed by Nanine †: and when they came to the catastrophe, 'Oh, said Verglan, 'that is carrying the jest too far: let Dolban love this little wench, with all my heart; but to marry her, I think, is rather too much.'---'It is a folly,

* *Ines de Castro*, from which Maliet's *E'vira* is taken.

† A petit piece of Voltaire, the story somewhat like *Pamela*.

perhaps,'

perhaps,' replied Belzors; ' but I feel myself capable of it: when virtue and beauty are united, I cannot answer for my discretion.' Not one of their observations escaped Madam Du Troëne; Emily, still more attentive, blushed at the advantage which Belzors had over his rival. After the play, they saw the Chevalier D'Olcet pass by in weepers. ' What is the meaning of this, Chevalier?' said Verglan to him with an air of gaiety. ' An old uncle,' replies D'Olcet, ' who has been so kind as to leave me ten thousand crowns a year.'—' Ten thousand crowns! I give you joy. This uncle was a brave old fellow. Ten thousand crowns! charming.' Belzors, embracing him in his turn, said to him, ' Chevalier, I condole with you on his death: I know that you think too justly to conceive any unnatural joy on the ~~death~~ ^{loss} of such a man. He has long been as a father to me,' said the Chevalier, confounded at the pleasant air he had assumed; ' but he was so old you know!'—' That is a cause for patience,' replied Belzors mildly, ' but not for consolation. A good relation is the best of friends; and the riches he has left you are not equal to such a one.'—' An old uncle is but a dull kind of friend,' said Verglan, ' and it is a rule that every one must live in his turn. Young folks would be much to be pitied if old fellows were immortal.' Belzors changed the discourse, in order to spare Verglan an humiliating reply. At every stroke of this contrast, Emily's heart was cruelly torn. Madam Du Troëne saw with joy the respectful and sensible air she assumed towards Belzors, and the cold and chagrined air with which she replied to Verglan's compliments; but, in order to bring about another trial, she invited them both to supper.

They played at cards. Verglan and Belzors had a *tête à tête* at trictrac. Verglan liked nothing but high play; Belzors would play for as little as you please. The party was interesting. Mademoiselle Du Troëne was of the number of lookers-on; and the Good Mother, in making her own party, kept an eye upon

upon her daughter, to read in her countenance what passed in her heart. Fortune favoured Belzors; Emily, displeased as she was with Verglan, had too good a heart not to suffer, on seeing him engaged in a serious loss. The young coxcomb could no longer contain himself; he grew angry, he doubled the game, and, before supper, he was on the point of playing upon honour. Ill-humour had seized him: he did his utmost to be merry; but the alteration of his countenance banished all joy. He perceived himself that they pitied him, and that they did not laugh at some pleasantries he endeavoured to throw out; he was humbled, and indignation would have taken place, if they had not quitted the table. Belzors, whom neither his own good luck, nor the chagrin of his rival had moved, was easy and modest, according to custom: They sat down again to play. Madam Du Troëne, who had finished her own party, came to be present at this, extremely uneasy at the issue it might have, but desirous that it might make its impression on the soul of Emily. The success exceeded her expectation: Verglan lost more than he had to pay; his trembling hand and pale countenance expressed the trouble he wanted to conceal. Belzors, with an unbounded complaisance, gave him as many opportunities of revenging himself as he thought proper; and when, by doubling the game, he had suffered Verglan to get off for a reasonable sum, 'If you please,' said he, 'we will stop here: I think I may fairly win as much as I was resolved to lose.' So much moderation and discretion excited a murmur of applause in the company. Verglan alone appeared insensible to it, and said, on getting up with an air of disdain, 'It was not worth the trouble of playing so long for.'

Emily did not sleep that night, so violently was her soul agitated with what she had just seen and heard. 'What a difference!' said she, 'and by what caprice is it that I must sigh at having been enlightened? Ought not the seduction to cease, as soon as we perceive that we are seduced? I admire one, and love the other.'

other. What is this misunderstanding between the heart and the reason, which makes us still hold dear that which we cease to esteem?

In the morning she appeared according to custom, at her mother's levee. ' You seem strangely altered,' said Madam Du Troëne. ' Yes, Madam, I am very much so.' — ' What, have not you slept well! — ' Very little,' said she with a sigh. ' You must endeavour, however, to look handsome; for I am going to take you this morning to the Thuilleries, where all Paris is to be assembled. I used to lament that the finest garden in the world was abandoned: I am very glad it is come into fashion again.'

Verglas failed not to repair here, and Madam Du Troëne retained him about her. The view of this walk had the air of enchantment. A thousand beauties, in all the gaiety of dress, were seated round the basin, whose fides are decorated by sculpture. The superb walk which this basin crowns, was filled with young nymphs; who, by their charms and accomplishments, attracted the desires after their steps. Verglas knew them all, and smiled upon them, following them with his eyes. ' This here,' said he, ' is Fatimé. Nothing is more tender and sensible; she lives like an angel with Cikon; he has given her twenty thousand crowns in six months; they love like two turtles. That is the celebrated Corinna: her house is the temple of luxury; she suppers the most brilliant in Paris; she does the honours of them with a grace that enchant us. Do you see that fair beauty who looks so modest, and whose glances wander languishingly on every side? She has three lovers, each of whom flattens himself, that he alone is the happy man. It is a pleasure to see her amidst her adorers, distributing slight favors to each, and persuading each in their turn that she jilts their rivals. She is a model of coquetry, and nobody deceives a set of lovers with so much address and sprightliness. She will go a great way, on my word, and I have told her so.' — ' You are in her confidence, then?' said Madam Du

Du Troëne. ‘ Oh, yes ; they do not dissemble with me : they know me ; they know very well that they cannot impose upon me.’—‘ And you, Belzors,’ said Madam Du Troëne to the sensible and virtuous young man, who had joined, ‘ are you initiated in these mysteries ?’—‘ No, Madam : I can believe that all this is very amusing ; but the charm makes the danger.’ Madam Du Troëne observed that the modest women received, with a cold and received air, the smiling and familiar salute of Verglan, while they returned with an air of esteem and friendship the respectful salutation of Belzors. She rallied Verglan on this distinction, in order to make Emily perceive it. ‘ It is ~~truly~~ ^{true} said he, ‘ Madam, that they behave rigidly ~~in public~~ in public ; but, *tête à tête*, they make no amends for it.’

On her return home with them, she received a visit from Eleonora, a young widow of uncommon beauty. Eleonora spoke of the misfortune she had sustained in losing a deserving husband ; she spoke of it with so much sensibility, candour, and grace, that Madam Du Troëne, Emily, and Belzors, listened to her with tears in their eyes. ‘ To a young, handsome woman,’ said Verglan, in a gay tone, ‘ a husband is a trifling loss, and easy to be repaired.’—‘ Not to me, Sir,’ replied the tender and modest Eleonora : ‘ a husband who honoured a wife of my age with his esteem and confidence, and whose delicate love never was tainted either by fears or jealousy, or the negligences of habitude, is not one of those whom we can easily replace.’—‘ He had, I take it for granted, a fine person ?’ said Verglan. ‘ No, Sir, but his soul was beautiful.’—‘ A beautiful soul !’ replied Verglan with a disdainful air : ‘ a beautiful soul ! He was young at least ?’—‘ Not at all ; he was of an age wherein we are affected when we have any occasion to be so.’—‘ But if he was neither young nor handsome, I do not see why you should afflict yourself. Confidence, esteem, handsome treatment, attend of course an amiable woman ; nothing of that kind could have been wanting to you. Believe me, Madam, the essential

'essential point is to suit yourself, as to age and figure; to unite the Graces with the Loves; in one word, to marry a handsome man, or to preserve your liberty.'---' Your advice is very gallant,' replied Eleonora; ' but unfortunately it is misplaced.'---' There is a pretty prude!' said Verglan, as soon as she was gone. ' Prudery, Sir;' replied Madam Du Troëne, ' is an exaggerated copy of prudence and reason; and I see nothing in Eleonora but what is plain and natural.'---' For my part,' said Belzors, ' I think her as respectable as she is handsome.'---' Respect her, Sir! respect her!' resumed Verglan, with vivacity, ' who binders you? She is the only person can take it ill.'---' Do you know,' interrupted Madam Du Troëne, ' who could console Eleonora? Such a man is Belzors; and if I were the confidante ~~that~~ he consulted to his choice, I would persuade him to think of her.'---' You do me great honour, Madam,' said Belzors, colouring, ' but Eleonora deserves a heart that is disengaged, and unhappily mine is not so.' At these words he took his leave, quite confounded with the dismissal which he thought he had received. ' For, in short,' said he, ' to invite me herself to pay my addresses to Eleonora, is not that giving me notice to renounce Emily? Alas! how little my heart is known to her!' Verglan, who took it in the same sense, affected to pity his rival. He spoke of him as one of the honestest men in the world. ' It is a pity he is so gloomy,' said he, with a tone of compassion; ' that is all they get by their virtue; they grow tiresome, and are dismissed.' Madam Du Troëne, without explaining herself, assured him, that she had not intended saying any thing disobligeing to a man for whom she had a most particular esteem and regard. In the mean time Emily sat with downcast eyes, and her blushes betrayed the agitation of her soul. Verglan, not doubting but this confusion was an emotion of joy, retired in triumph, and the day following wrote her a billet conceived in these terms.

' You

' You must have thought me very romantic, beautiful Emily, in having so long spoke to you only by my eyes! Do not accuse me of an unjust diffidence: I have read your heart, and if I had only that to consult, I should be very sure of its answer. But you depend on a mother, and mothers have their caprices. Happily your mother loves you, and her affection has enlightened her choice. The dismission of Belzor apprizes me that she has determined; but your consent ought to precede hers: I wait it with the most tender impatience, and the most violent love.'

Emily opened this billet without knowing whence it came: she was as much offended as surprised at it, and without hesitation communicated it to her mother. ' I take very kindly of you,' said Madam Du Troëne, ' this mark of your friendship; but I owe you in my turn confidence for confidence. Belzors has writ to me; read his letter.' Emily obeyed and read.

' Madam,

I honour the virtue, I admire the beauty, I do justice to Eleonora; but has Heaven favoured only her? And after having adored in your image every thing that Heaven has made most affecting, do you think me in a condition to follow the counsel which you have given me? I will not say to you how cruel it is; my respect stifles my complaints. If I have not the name, I have at least the sentiments of your son, and that character cannot be effaced.'

Emily could not finish without the most lively emotion. Her mother pretended not to perceive it, and said to her, ' There now, child, I indeed must answer these two rivals; but you must dictate my answers,'---' I, Madam!'---' Who else? Is it I whom they demand in marriage? Is it my heart that I am to consult?'---' Ah, Madam! is not your will mine? Have not you the right to dispose of me?'---' You are very good, my dear; but as your own happiness is concerned, it is just that you should decide on it. These young men are both well born; their conditions and fortunes nearly

the

the same ; see which comes up nearest to the idea you have formed of a good husband. Let us keep him, and dismiss the other.' Emily struck, kissed her mother's hands, and bathed them with her tears. ' Compleat your goodness,' said she to her, ' by enlightning me in my choice : the more important it is, the more need have I for your advice to determine it. The husband whom my mother shall chuse for me shall be dear to me ; my heart dares promise that.'---' No, my dear, there is no laying out of mere duty, and you know better than myself the man who is likely to make you happy. If you are not so, I will console you : I would readily share your sorrows, but I would not be the cause of them. Come, I take pen in hand ; I am going to write ; you need but to dictate.' Imagine the trouble, the confusion, the moving situation of Emily. Trembling by the side of this tender mother, one hand on her eyes and the other on her heart, she essayed in vain to obey her ; her voice expired on her lips. ' Well,' said the good mother, ' to which of the two are we to return an answer ? Make an end, or I shall grow impatient.'---' To Verglan,' said Emily, with a feeble and faltering voice. ' To Verglan ; be it so : what shall I say to him ?'

" It is impossible, Sir, that a man, so necessary to society as yourself, should renounce it to live in the bosom of his family. My Emily has not qualities sufficient to indemnify you for the sacrifices which she would require. Continue to embellish the world ; for it is for that you are made."---' Is this all ?'---' Yes, Madam.'---' And to Belzors ; what shall we say to him ?' Emily continued to dictate with somewhat more confidence. ' To deem you worthy of a woman as virtuous as handsome, was not, Sir, to forbid you to make a choice which interests me as much as it does me honour ; it was even to encourage you. Your modesty has reversed things, and you have been unjust both to yourself and to me. Come, and learn to judge better of the intentions of a Good Mother. I dispose of the heart

of my daughter, and I esteem none in the world more than yourself."

"Come hither, my child, that I may embrace you," cried Madam Du Tioëne; "you fulfil the wishes of your mother, and you could not have said better, though you had consulted my heart."

Belzors hastened to them, quite beside himself with joy. Never was marriage more applauded, more fortunate. Belzors' affection was divided between Emily and her mother; and it was a moot point among the world, which of the two he loved most.

THE SHEPHERDESS OF THE ALPS.

IN the mountains of Savoy, not far from the road from Briançon to Modena, is a solitary valley, the sight of which inspires travellers with a pleasing melancholy. Three little hills in form of an amphitheatre, on which are scattered, at a great distance from each other, some shepherds huts, torrents that fall from the mountains, clumps of trees here and there, pastures always green, form the ornament of this rural place.

The marchioness of Fonroïe was returning from France to Italy with her husband. The axle-tree of their carriage broke, and as the day was on the decline, they were obliged to seek in this valley for some shelter to pass the night. As they advanced towards one of the huts, they saw a flock going that way, conducted by a shepherdess whose gait astonished them. They drew nearer, and heard a heavenly voice, whose plaintive and moving accents made the echoes groan.

"How the setting sun still glitters with a gentle light! It is thus," said she, "that at the end of a painful race, the exhausted soul departs to grow young again in the pure source of immortality. But, alas! how distant is the period, and how long is life!" On saying these words, the shepherdess retired, with her head inclined; but the negligence of her attitude seemed to give still more nobleness and majesty to her person and deportment.

Struck

Struck with what they saw, and still more with what they had just heard, the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose redoubled their pace, in order to overtake the shepherdess whom they admired. But what was their surprize, when under the plainest head dress, beneath the most humble garb, they saw all the graces, all the beauties united! ‘ Child,’ said the marchioness to her, on seeing that she avoided them, ‘ fear nothing; we are travellers, whom an accident obliges to seek shelter in these huts till the day: will you be so good as to be our guide?’—‘ I pity you, Madam,’ said the shepherdess to her, looking down and blushing; ‘ these huts are inhabited by poor wretches, and you will be very ill lodged.’—‘ You lodge there, without doubt, yourself,’ replied the Marchioness; ‘ and I can easily endure, for one night, the inconveniences which you suffer always.’—‘ I am formed for that,’ said the shepherdess, with a modesty that charmed them. ‘ No, surely,’ said the Marquis de Fonrose, who could no longer dissemble the emotion she had caused in him; ‘ no, you are not formed to suffer; and Fortune is very unjust! Is it possible, lovely damsel, that so many charms are buried in this desert, under that habit?’—‘ Fortune, Sir!’ replied Adelaïde, (this was the name of the shepherdess) ‘ Fortune is not cruel, but when she takes from us that which she has given us. My condition has its pleasures for one who knows no other; and custom creates wants for you, which shepherds do not know.’—‘ That may be,’ said the Marquis, ‘ with respect to those whom Heaven has placed from their birth in this obscure condition; but you, astonishing damsel, you whom I admire, you who enchant me, you were never born what you now are! that air, that gait, that voice, that language, every thing betrays you. But two words which you have just now spoken, proclaim a cultivated understanding, a noble soul. Proceed; teach us what misfortune can have reduced you to this strange abasement.’—‘ For a man in misfortune,’

tune,' replied Adelaïde, ' there are a thousand ways to extricate himself ; for a woman, you know, there is no other honest resource than servitude, and the choice of masters. They do well, in my opinion, who prefer the good. You are now going to see mine ; you will be charmed with the innocence of their lives, the candour, the simplicity, the probity of their manners.'

While she talked thus, they arrived at the hut. It was separated by a partition from the fold into which this incognita drove her sheep, telling them over with the most serious attention, and without deigning to take any farther notice of the travellers, who contemplated her. An old man and his wife, such as Philemon and Baucis are described to us, came forth to meet their guests, with that village-honour which recalls the golden age to our minds. ' We have nothing to offer you,' said the good woman, ' but fresh straw for a bed ; milk, fruit, and rye-bread for your food ; but the little that Heaven gives us, we will most heartily share with you.' The travellers on entering the hut, were surprized at the air of regularity which every thing breathed there. The table was one single plank of walnut-tree highly polished : they saw themselves in the enamel of the earthen vessels designed for their milk. Every thing presented the image of cheerful poverty, and of the first wants of Nature agreeably satisfied. ' It is our dear daughter,' said the good woman, ' who takes upon her the management of our house. In the morning, before her flock ramble far into the country, and while they begin to graze round the house on the grass covetous with dew, she washes, cleans, and sets every thing in order, with a dexterity that charms us.'—' What !' said the marchionets, ' is this shepherdess your daughter ?'—' Ah, Madam, would to Heaven she were !' cried the good old woman ; it is my heart that calls her so, for I have a mother's love for her : but I am not so happy as to have borne her ; we are not worthy to have given her birth.'—' Who is she then ? Whence comes she ? and what misfortune has reduced her to such a condition ?'

dition?'—‘ All that is unknown to us. It is now four years since she came in the habit of a female peasant to offer herself to keep our flocks; we would have taken her for nothing, so much had her good look and pleasing manner won upon our hearts. We doubted her being born a villager; but our questions afflicted her, and we thought it our duty to abstain from them. This respect has but augmented in proportion as we have become better acquainted with her soul; but the more we would humble ourselves to her, the more she humbles herself to us. Never had daughter more attention for her father and mother, nor officiousness more tender. She cannot obey us, because we are far from commanding her; but it seems as if she saw through us, and every thing that we can wish is done, before we perceive that she thinks of it. She is an angel come down among us to comfort our old age.’—‘ And what is she doing now in the fold?’ demanded the marchioness. ‘ Giving the flock fresh litter; drawing the milk from the ewes and she-goats. This milk, pressed out by her hand, seems to become the more delicate for it. I, who go and sell it in the town, cannot serve it fast enough. They think it delicious. ‘ The dear child employs herself, while she is watching the flock, in works of straw and osier, which are admitted by all. Every thing becomes valuable beneath her fingers. You see, Madam,’ continued the good old woman, ‘ you see here the image of an easy and quiet life: it is she that procures it to us. This heavenly daughter is never employed but to make us happy.’—‘ Is she happy herself?’ demanded the Marquis De Fonrose. ‘ She endeavours to persuade us so,’ replied the old man; ‘ but I have frequently observed to my wife, that at her return from the pasture, she had her eyes bedewed with tears, and the most afflicted air in the world. The moment she sees us, she affects to smile; but we see plainly that she has some grief that consumes her. We dare not ask her what it is.’—‘ Ah, Madam!’ said the old woman, ‘ how I suffer for this child, when

she persists in leading out her flocks to pasture in spite of rain and frost ! Many a time have I thrown myself on my knees, in order to prevail with her to let me go in her stead ; but I never could prevail on her. She goes out at sun-rise, and returns in the evening benumbed with cold. " Judge, now," says she to me, " whether I would suffer you to quit your fire-side, and expose yourself at your age to the rigours of the season. I am scarce able to withstand it myself." Nevertheless, she brings home under her arm the wood with which we warm ourselves ; and when I complain of the fatigue she gives herself : " Have done, have done, my good mother, it is by exercise that I keep myself from cold : labour is made for my age." In short, Madam, she is as good as she is handsome, and my husband and I never speak of her but with tears in our eyes.'—' And if she should be taken from you?' said the marchioness.—' We should lose,' interrupted the old man, ' all that we hold dearest in the world ; but if she herself was to be the happier for it, we would die happy in that consolation.'—' Oh, aye!' replied the old woman, shedding tears ; ' Heaven grant her a fortune worthy of her, if it be possible ! It was my hope, that that hand so dear to me, would have closed my eyes, for I love her more than my life.' Her arrival broke off their discourse.

She appeared with a pail of milk in one hand, a basket of fruit in the other ; and after saluting them with an ineffable grace, she directed her attention to the care of the family, as it nobody observed her. ' You give yourself a great deal of trouble, my dear child,' said the marchioness. ' I endeavour, Madam, replied she, ' to fulfil the intention of those I serve, who are desirous of entertaining you in the best manner they are able. You will have,' continued she, spreading over the table a coarse but very white cloth, ' you will have a frugal and rural repast : this bread is not the whitest in the world, but it tastes pretty well ; the eggs are fresh, the milk is good ; and the fruits, which I have

I have just now gathered, are such as the season affords.' The diligence, the attention, the noble and becoming grace with which this wonderful shepherdess paid them all the duties of hospitality; the respect she shewed for her master and mistress, whether she spoke to them, or whether she sought to read in their eyes what they wanted her to do; all these things filled the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose with astonishment and admiration. As soon as they were laid down on the bed of fresh straw which the shepherdels had prepared for them herself, 'Our adventure has the air of a prodigy,' said they one to another; 'we must clear up this mystery; we must carry away this child along with us.'

At break of day, one of the men, who had been up all night mending their carriage, came to inform them that it was thoroughly repaired. Madam De Fontole, before she set out, ordered the shepherdels to be called to her. 'Without wanting to pry,' said she, 'into the secret of your birth, and the cause of your misfortune; all that I see, all that I hear, interests me in your favour. I see that your spirit has railed you above ill-fortune; and that you have suited your sentiments to your present condition: your chains and your virtues render it respectable, but yet it is unworthy of you. I have it in my power, amiable stranger, to procure you a happier lot; my husband's intentions agree entirely with mine. I have a considerable estate at Turin: I want a friend of my own sex, and I shall think I bear away from this place an invaluable treasure, if you will accompany me. Separate from the proposal, from the suit I now make you, all notion of servitude: I do not think you made for that condition; but though my prepossessions in your favour should deceive me, I had rather raise you above your birth, than leave you beneath it. I repeat to you, it is a friend of my own sex that I want to attach to me. For the rest, be under no concern for the fate of these good people: there is nothing which I would not do to make them amends for your loss; at least they shall have where with

with to spend the remainder of their lives happily, according to their condition ; and it is from your hand that they shall receive the benefits I intend them.* The old folks who were present at this discourse, kissing the hands of the marchioness, and throwing themselves at her feet, begged the young incognita to accept of these generous offers : they represented to her with tears, that they were on the brink of the grave ; that she had no other consolation than to make them happy in their old age ; and that at their death, when left to herself, their habitation would become a dreadful solitude. The shepherdess, embracing them, mingled her tears with theirs ; she returned thanks to the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose for their goodness, with a sensibility that made her still more beautiful. ‘ I cannot,’ said she, ‘ accept of your courtesies. Heaven has marked out my place, and its will is accomplished ; but your goodness has made impressions on my soul which will never be effaced. The respectable name of Fonrose shall ever be present to my imagination. I have but one favour more to ask you,’ said she, blushing, and looking down ; ‘ that is, to be so good as to bury this adventure in eternal silence, and to leave the world for ever ignorant of the lot of an unknown wretch, who wants to live and die in oblivion.’ The Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose, moved with pity and grief, redoubled a thousand times their instances : she was immovable, and the old people, the travellers, and the shepherdess, separated with tears in their eyes.

During the journey, the marquis and his lady were taken up with nothing but this adventure. They thought they had been in a dream. Their imaginations being filled with this kind of romance, they arrive at Turin. It may easily be imagined that they did not keep silence, and this was an inexhaustible subject for reflections and conjectures. The young Fonrose, being present at these discourses, lost not one circumstance. He was at that age wherein the imagination is most lively,

lively, and the heart most susceptible ; but he was one of those characters whose sensibility displays not itself outwardly, and who are so much the more violently agitated, when they are so at all, as the sentiment which affects them does not weaken itself by any sort of dissipation. All that Fonrose hears said of the charms, virtues and misfortunes of the Shepherdess of Savoy, kindles in his soul the most ardent desire of seeing her. He forms to himself an image of her, which is always present to him. He compares her to every thing that he sees, and every thing that he sees vanishes before her. But the more his impatience redoubles, the more care he takes to conceal it. Turin becomes odious to him. The valley, which conceals from the world its brightest ornament, attracts his whole soul. It is there that happiness waits him. But if his project is known, he foresees the greatest obstacles : they will never consent to the journey he meditates ; it is the folly of a young man, the consequences of which they will be apprehensive of ; the Shepherdess herself, affrighted at his pursuits, will not fail to withdraw herself from them ; he loses her, if he should be known. After all these reflections, which employed his thoughts for three months, he takes a resolution to quit every thing for her sake ; to go, under the habit of a shepherd, to seek her in her solitude, and to die there, or to draw her out of it.

He disappears ; they see him no more. His parents become alarmed at his absence : their fear increases every day ; their expectations disappointed throw the whole family into affliction ; the fruitlessness of their enquiries compels their despair ; a duel, an assassination, every thing that is most unfortunate, presents itself to their imagination ; and these unhappy parents ended their researches by lamenting the death of their son, their only hope. While his family are in mourning, Fonrose, under the habit of a shepherd, presents himself to the inhabitants of the hamlets adjoining to the vallies, which they had but too well described to him.

him. His ambition is accomplished : they trust him with the care of their flocks.

The first day after his arrival, he left them to wander at random, solely attentive to discover the places to which the shepherdess led hers.

' Let us manage,' said he, ' the timidity of this solitary fair-one : if she is unfortunate, her heart has need of consolation ; if it be nothing but a desire to banish herself from the world, and the pleasure of a tranquil and innocent life that retains her here, she will feel some dull moments, and wish for company to amuse or console her. If I succeed so far as to render that agreeable to her, she will soon find it necessary ; then I shall take counsel from the situation of her soul. After all we are here alone, as it were in the world, and we shall be every thing to each other. From confidence to friendship the passage is not long ; and from friendship to love, at our age, the road is still easier.' And what was Fonrose's age when he reasoned thus ? Fonrose was eighteen : but three months reflection on the same object unfolds a number of ideas. While he was thus giving himself up to his imagination, with his eyes wandering over the country, he hears at a distance that voice, the charms of which had been so often extolled to him. The emotion it excited in him was as lively as it she had been unexpected. ' It is here,' said the shepherdess in her plaintive strains ; ' it is here that my heart enjoys the only happiness that remains to it. My grief has a luxury in it for my soul ; I prefer its bitterness to the deceitful sweets of joy.' These accents rent the sensible heart of Fonrose. ' What,' said he, ' can be the cause of the chagrin that consumes her ? How pleasing would it be to console her ! ' A hope still more pleasing presumed, not without difficulty, to flatter his desires. He feared to alarm the shepherdess if he resigned himself imprudently to his impatience of seeing her near, and for the first time it was sufficient to have heard her. The next day he went out again to lead his sheep to pasture ; and

COOKE'S POCKET EDITION OF SELECT NOVELS.



and after observing the route which she had taken, he placed himself at the foot of the rock, which the day before repeated to him the sounds of that touching voice. I forgot to mention that Fonrose, to the handsomest figure had joined those talents which the young nobility of Italy do not neglect. He played on the hautboy like Besuzzi, of whom he had taken his lessons, and who formed at that time the delight of Europe. Adelaïde, buried in her own afflicting ideas, had not yet made her voice heard, and the echoes kept silence. All on a sudden this silence was interrupted by the plaintive sounds of Fonrose's hautboy. These unknown sounds excited in the soul of Adelaïde, a surprize mingled with anxiety. The keepers of the flocks that wandered on the hills had never caused her to hear aught before but the sounds of rustic pipes. Immoveable and attentive, she seeks with her eyes who it was that could form such harmonious sounds. She perceives, at a distance, a young shepherd seated in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which he fed his flock; she draws near, to hear him the better. ' See,' said she, ' what the mere instinct of Nature can do! The ear teaches this shepherd all the refinements of art. Can any one breathe purer sounds? What delicacy in his inflexions! what variety in his gradations! Who can say after this, that taste is not a gift of Nature?' Ever since Adelaïde had dwelled in this solitude, this was the first time that her grief, suspended by an agreeable distraction, had delivered up her soul to the sweet emotion of pleasure. Fonrose, who saw her approach and seat herself at the foot of a willow to hear him, pretended not to perceive her. He seized without seeming to affect it, the moment of her retreat, and managed the course of his own flock in such a manner as to meet her on a declivity of a hill, where the road crossed. He cast only one look on her, and continued his route, as if taken up with nothing but the care of his flock. But what beauties had that one look ran over; What eyes! what a divine mouth! How much more ravishing

ravishing still would those features be, which are so noble and touching in their languor, if love re-animated them! He saw plainly that grief alone had withered in their spring the roses on her lovely cheeks; but of so many charms, that which had moved him most was the noble elegance of her person and her gait; in the ease of her motions he thought he saw a young cedar, whose straight and flexible trunk yields gently to the zephyrs. This image, which love had just engraven in flitting characters on his memory, took up all his thoughts. ‘How feebly,’ said he, ‘have they painted to me this beauty, unknown to the world, whose adoration she merits! And it is a desir’t that she inhabits! and it is thatch that covers her! She who ought to see kings at her feet, employs herself in tending an humble flock! Beneath what garments has she presented herself to my view? She adorns every thing, and nothing disfigures her. Yet what a life for a frame so delicate! Coarse food, a savage climate, a bed of straw; great gods! And for whom are the roses made? Yes, I will draw her out of this state, so much too hard and too unworthy of her.’ Sleep interrupted his reflections, but effaced not her image. Adelaide, on her side, sensibly struck with the youth, the beauty of Fonrose, ceased not to admire the caprices of Fortune. ‘Where is Nature going,’ said she, ‘to re-assemble together so many talents and so many graces! But, alas! those gifts which to him are here but useless, would be perhaps his misfortune in a more elevated state. What evils does not beauty create in the world! Unhappy as I am, is it for me to set any value on it?’ This melancholy reflection began to poison in her soul the pleasures she had tasted; she reproached herself for having been sensible of it, and resolved to deny it herself for the future. The next day Fonrose thought he perceived that she avoided his approach; he fell into a profound melancholy. ‘Could she suspect my disguise?’ said he. ‘Should I have betrayed it myself?’ This uneasiness possessed him all the live long-day, and

and his hautboy was neglected. Adelaïde was not so far but she could easily have heard it; and his silence astonished her. She began to sing herself. ‘It seems,’ said the song, ‘that every thing around me partakes of my heaviness: the birds sing forth none but sorrowful notes; Echo replies to me in complaints; the Zephyrs moan amidst these leaves; the sound of the brooks imitates my sighs, one might say that they flowed with tears.’ Fonrote, lostened by these strains, could not help replying to them. Never was concert more moving than that of his hautboy with Adelaïde’s voice. ‘O Heaven!’ said she, ‘it is enchantment! I dare not believe my ears: it is not a shepherd, it is a god whom I have heard! Can the natural tense of harmony inspire such concord of sounds?’ While she was speaking thus, a rural, or rather a celestial melody, made the valley resound. Adelaïde thought she saw those prodigies realizing which Poetry attributes to her sprightly sister Music. Astonished, confounded, she knew not whether she ought to take herself away, or resign herself up to this enchantment. But she perceived the shepherd, whom she had just heard, re-assembling his flock in order to regain his hut. ‘He knows not,’ says she, ‘the delight he diffuses around him; his undiscensed soul is not in the least vain of it: he waits not even for the praises I owe him. Such is the power of music: it is the only talent that places its happiness in itself; all the others require witnesses. This gift of Heaven was granted to man in his innocence: it is the parent of all pleasures. Alas! it is the only one I still relish; and I consider this shepherd as a new echo, who is come to answser my grief.’

The following day Fonrote affected to keep at a distance in his turn: Adelaïde was afflicted at it. ‘Chance,’ said she, ‘seemed to have procured me this feeble consolation; I gave myself up to it too easily, and, to punish me, she has deprived me of it.’ At last, one day, when they happened to meet on the declivity of the hill, ‘Shepherd,’ said she to him, ‘are you

leading your flocks far off?' These first words of Adelaïde caused an emotion in Fonrose which almost deprived him of the use of his voice. 'I do not know,' said he, hesitating; 'it is not I who lead my flock, but my flock leads me; these places are better known to it than to me: I leave to it the choice of the best pastures.'—' Whence are you, then?' said the shepherdess to him. 'I was born beyond the Alps,' replied Fonrose. 'Were you born among shepherds?' continued she. 'As I am a shepherd,' said he, looking down, 'I must have been born to be one.'—' I doubt it,' replied Adelaïde, viewing him with attention. 'Your talents, your language, your very air, all tell me, that Fate had placed you in a better situation.'—' You are very obliging,' said Fonrose; 'but ought you of all persons, to believe that Nature refuses every thing to shepherds? Were you born to be a queen?' Adelaïde blushed at this answer; and changing the subject, 'The other day,' said she, 'by the sound of a hautboy you accompanied my songs with an art that would be a prodigy in a simple shepherd.'—' It is your voice that is so,' replied Fonrose, 'in a simple shepherdess.'—' But has nobody instructed you?'—' I have, like yourself, no other guide than my heart and my ear. You sung, I was melted; what my heart feels, my hautboy expresses; I breathe my soul into it. This is the whole of my secret; nothing in the world is easier.'—' That is incredible,' said Adelaïde. 'I said the very same on hearing you,' replied Fonrose, 'but I was forced to believe it. What will you say? Nature and Love sometimes take a delight in assembling their most precious gifts in persons of the most humble fortune, to shew that there is no condition which they cannot ennoble.'

During this discourse, they advanced towards the valley; and Fonrose, whom a ray of hope now animated, began to make the air resound with those sprightly notes which pleasure inspires. 'Ah, pr'y-thee now!' said Adelaïde, 'spare my soul the troublesome

some image of a sentiment which she cannot relish. This solitude is consecrated to Grief; her echoes are not used to repeat the accents of a profane joy; here every thing groans in concert with me.'—‘ I also have cause to complain !’ replied the young man; and these words, pronounced with a sigh, were followed by a long silence. ‘ You have cause to complain !’ replied Adelaïde; ‘ is it of mankind ? is it of fortune ?’—‘ No matter,’ said he, ‘ but I am not happy: ask me no more.’—‘ Hear me,’ said Adelaïde: ‘ Heaven gives us to each other as a consolation in our troubles; mine are like an overwhelming load, which weighs down my heart. Whoever you may be, if you know misfortune, you ought to be compassionate, and I believe you worthy of my confidence; but promise me that it shall be mutual.’—‘ Alas !’ said Fonrose, ‘ my misfortunes are such, that I shall perhaps be condemned never to reveal them.’ This mystery but redoubled the curiosity of Adelaïde. ‘ Repair to-morrow,’ said she to him, ‘ to the foot of that hill, beneath that old tufted oak where you have heard me moan. There I will teach you things that will excite your pity.’ Fonrose passed the night in the utmost emotion. His fate depended on what he was going to hear. A thousand alarming ideas agitated him by turns. He dreaded, above all, the being driven to despair by the communication of an unsuccessful and faithful love. ‘ If she is in love,’ said he, ‘ I am undone !’

He repairs to the appointed place. He sees Adelaïde arrive, the day was overcast with clouds, and nature mourning seemed to forebode the sadness of their conversation. As soon as they were seated at the foot of the oak, Adelaïde spoke thus. ‘ You see these stones which the grass begins to cover; they are the tomb of the most tender, the most virtuous of men, whom my love and my imprudence have cost his life. I am a French woman, of a family of distinction; and, to my misfortune, too rich. The Count D’Orestan conceived the tenderest passion for me; I was sensible of it, sen-

sible to excess. My parents opposed the inclination of our hearts, and my frantic passion made me consent to a marriage sacred to virtuous souls, but disallowed by the laws. Italy was at that time the theatre of war. My husband went thither to join the corps which he was to command; I followed him as far Briançon: my foolish tenderness retained him there two days, in spite of himself: for he, a young man, full of honour, prolonged his stay there with the greatest reluctance. He sacrificed his duty to me: but what would not I have sacrificed to him? In a word, I required it of him; and he could not withstand my tears. He took leave with a foreboding which alarmed me. I accompanied him as far as this valley, where I received his adieu; and in order to wait to hear from him, I returned to Briançon. A few days after a report was spread of a battle. I doubted whether D'Orestan had got thither; I wished it for his honour, I dreaded it for my love; when I received a letter from him, which I thought very consoling, "I shall be such a day, at such an hour," said he, "in the valley, and under the oak where we parted; I shall repair there alone; I conjure you to go there, and expect me, likewise, alone; I live yet but for you." How great was my mistake! I perceived in his billet nothing more than an impatience to see me again, and this impatience made me happy. I repaired, then, to this very oak. D'Orestan arrives; and after the tenderest reception: "You would have it so, my dear Adelaïde," said he, "I have failed in my duty at the most important moment of my life. What I feared is come to pass. A battle has happened, my regiment charged. It performed prodigies of valour, and I was not there. I am dishonoured, lost without resource. I reproach not you with my misfortune, but I have now but one sacrifice more to make you, and my heart is come to accomplish it." At this discourse, pale, trembling, and scarce breathing, I took my husband into my arms. I felt my blood congeal in my veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell down senseless. He availed himself

himself of my fainting to tear himself from my bosom ; and in a little time I was recalled to life by the report of a shot which killed him. I will not describe to you the situation I was in ; it is inexpressible ; and the tears which you now see flowing, the sighs that stifle my voice, are but a feeble image of it. After passing the whole night beside his bloody corpse, in a grief that stu-pified me, my first care was to bury along with him my shame : my hands dug out his grave. I seek not to move you ; but the moment in which the earth was to sepa-rate me from the sorrowful remains of my husband, was a thousand times more dreadful to me than that can be which is to separate my body from my soul. Spent with grief, and deprived of nourishment, my enfeebled hands took up two whole days in hollowing out this tomb with inconceivable labour. When my strength forsook me, I reposed myself on the livid and cold bosom of my husband. In short, I paid him the rites of sepulture, and my heart promised him to wait in these parts till death reunites us. In the mean time, cruel hunger began to devour my exhausted entrails. I thought it criminal to refuse nature the supports of a life more grievous than death. I changed my garments for the plain habit of a shepherdess, and I embraced that condition as my only refuge. From that time my only consolation has been to come here, and weep over this grave, which shall be my own. You see,' continued she, 'with what sincerity I open my soul to you. With you I may henceforth weep at liberty : it is a consolation I had need of ; but I expect the same confidence from you. Do not think that you have deceived me. I see clearly that the state of a shepherd is as foreign, and newer to you than to me. You are young, perhaps sensible ; and, if I may believe my conjectures, our misfortunes have the same source, and you have loved as well as I. We shall only feel the more for one another, I consider you as a friend, whom Heaven, touched by my misfortunes, deigns to send me in my solitude. Do

you also consider me as a friend, capable of giving you, if not salutary counsel, at least a consolatory example.'

' You pierce my very soul,' said Fonrose, overcome with what he had just heard; ' and whatever sensibility you may attribute to me, you are very far from conceiving the impression that the recital of your misfortunes has made on me. Alas! why cannot I return it with that confidence which you testify towards me, and of which you are so worthy? But I warned you of it; I foresaw it. Such is the nature of my sorrows, that an eternal silence must shut them up in the bottom of my heart. You are very unhappy,' added he with a profound sigh; ' I am still more unhappy: this is all I can tell you. Be not offended at my silence; it is terrible to me to be condemned to it. The constant companion of all your steps, I will soften your labours: I will partake of all your griefs: I will see you weep over this grave, I will mingle my tears with yours. You shall not repent having deposited your woes in a heart, alas! but too sensible.'—' I repent me of it from this moment,' said she with confusion; and both, with downcast eyes, retired in silence from each other. Adelaide, on quitting Fonrose, thought she saw in his countenance the impression of a profound grief. ' I have revived,' said she, ' the sense of his sorrows; and what must be their horror, when he thinks himself still more wretched than I!'

From that day more sighing and more conversation followed between Fonrose and Adelaidé. They neither sought nor avoided one another: looks of consternation formed almost their only language; if he found her weeping over the grave of her husband, his heart was seized with pity, jealousy, and grief; he contemplated her in silence, and answered her sighs with deep groans.

Two months had passed away in this painful situation, and Adelaide saw Fonrose's youth wither as a flower. The sorrow which consumed him afflicted her so much the more deeply, as the cause of it was unknown.

known to her. She had not the most distant suspicion that she was the cause of it. However, as it is natural, when two sentiments divide a soul, for one to weaken the other, Adelaïde's regret on account of the death of D'Oïstan became less lively every day, in proportion as she delivered herself up to the pity with which Fonrose inspired her. She was very sure that this pity had nothing but what was innocent in it; it did not even come into her head to defend herself from it; and the object of this generous sentiment being continually present to her view, awakened it every instant. The languor into which this young man was fallen became such, that she thought it her duty not to leave him any longer to himself. ' You are dying,' said she to him, ' and you add to my griefs that of seeing you consumed with sorrow under my eye, without being able to apply any remedy. If the recital of the imprudences of my youth has not inspired you with a contempt for me; if the purest and tenderest friendship be dear to you: in short, if you would not render me more unhappy than I was before I knew you, confide to me the cause of your griefs: you have no person in the world but myself to assist you in supporting them; your secret, though it were more important than mine, fear not that I shall divulge. The death of my husband has placed a gulph betwixt the world and me; and the confidence which I require will soon be buried in this grave, to which grief is with slow steps conducting me.' —' I hope to go before you,' said Fonrose, bursting into tears. ' Suffer me to finish my deplorable life without leaving you afterwards the reproach of having shortened its course.' —' O Heaven, what do I hear,' cried she with distraction. ' What I! can I have contributed to the evils which overwhelm you? Go on; you pierce my soul! What have I done? what have I said? Alas, I tremble! Good heaven! hast thou sent me into the world only to create wretches? Speak; nay, speak; you must no longer conceal who you are; you have said too much to dissemble any longer.' —' Well, then, I am—I am Fonrose,

Fonrose, the son of those travellers, whom you filled with admiration and respect. All that they related of your virtues and your charms inspired me with the fatal design of coming to see you in this disguise. I have left my family in the deepest sorrow, thinking they have lost me; and lamenting my death. I have seen you; I know what attaches you to this place; I know that the only hope that is left me, is to die here adoring you. Give me no useless counsel or unjust reproaches. My resolution is as firm and immoveable as your own. If in betraying my secret, you disturb the last moments of a life almost at an end, you will to no purpose injure me, who would never offend you.'

Adelaide, confounded, endeavoured to calm the despair into which this young man was plunged. 'Let me,' said she, 'do to his parents the service of restoring him to life; let me save their only hope: Heaven presents me with this opportunity of acknowledging their favours.' Thus, far from making him furious by a misplaced rigour, all the tenderness of pity, and consolation of friendship, were put in practice in order to soothe him.

'Heavenly angel!' cried Fonrose, 'I see all the reluctance that you feel to make any one unhappy: your heart is with him who reposes in this grave: I see that nothing can detach you from him; I see how ingenuous your virtue is to conceal your woe from me; I perceive it in all its extent, I am overwhelmed by it, but I pardon you: it is your duty never to love me, it is mine ever to adore you.'

Impatient of executing the design which she had conceived, Adelaide arrives at her hut, 'Father,' said she to her old master, 'do you think you have strength to travel to Turin? I have need of somebody whom I can trust, to give the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose the most interesting intelligence.' The old man replied, that his zeal to serve them inspired him with courage. 'Go,' resumed Adelaide, 'you will find them bewailing the death of their only son; tell them that he is living,

ing, and in these parts, and that I will restore him to them; but that there is an indispensable necessity for their coming here themselves to fetch him.'

He sets out, arrives at Turin, sends in his address as the old man of the valley of Savoy. Ah! cried Madam de Fonrose, 'some misfortune, perhaps, has happened to our shepherdess.'—'Let him come in,' added the marquis, 'he will tell us, perhaps, that she consents to live with us.'—'After the loss of my son,' said the marchioness, 'it is the only comfort I can taste in this world.' The old man is introduced. He throws himself at their feet; they raise him. 'You are lamenting the death of your son,' said he; 'I come to tell you that he lives; our dear child has discovered him in the valley; she sends me to inform you of it; but yourselves only, she says, can bring him back.' As he spoke this, surprize and joy deprived the Marchioness De Fonrose of her senses. The Marquis distracted and amazed, calls out for help for his lady, recals her to life, embraces the old man, publishes to the whole house that their son is restored to them. The Marchioness resuming her spirits, 'What shall we do,' said she, taking the old man by the hands, and pressing them with tenderness, 'what shall we do in gratitude for this benefit which restores life to us?'

Every thing is ordered for their departure. They set out with the good man! they travel night and day, and repair to the valley, where their only good awaits them. The shepherdess was out at pasture; the old woman conducts them to her; they approach. How great is their surprize! their son, that well-beloved son, is by her side in the habit of a simple shepherd. Their hearts sooner than their eyes acknowledge him. 'Ah, cruel child,' cried his mother, throwing herself into his arms, 'what sorrow have you occasioned us! why withdraw yourself from our tenderness? and what is it you come here for?'—'To adore,' said he, 'what you yourself admired.'—'Pardon me, Madam,' said Adelaïde, while Fonrose embraced his father's knees, who raised him with

with kindness; ‘ pardon me for having left you so long in grief: if I had known it sooner, you should have been sooner consoled.’ After the first emotions of nature, Fonrose relapsed into the deepest affliction. ‘ Let us go,’ said the Marquis, ‘ let us go rest ourselves in the hut, and forget all the pain that this young madman has occasioned us.’ —‘ Yes, Sir, I have been mad,’ said Fonrose to his father, who led him by the hand. ‘ Nothing but the loss of my reason could have suspended in my heart the emotions of nature, so as to make me forget the most sacred duties; in short, to detach myself from every thing that I held dearest in the world: but this madness you gave birth to, and I am but too severely punished for it. I love without hope the most accomplished person in the world; you see nothing, you know nothing of this incomparable woman; she is honesty, sensibility, virtue itself; I love her even to idacity, I cannot be happy without her, and I know that she cannot be mine.’ —‘ Has she confided to you,’ said the Marquis, ‘ the secret of her birth?’ —‘ I have learned enough of it,’ said Fonrose, ‘ to assure you, that it is in no respect beneath my own; she has even renounced a considerable fortune to buy herself in this desert.’ —‘ And do you know what has induced her to it?’ —‘ Yes, Sir, but it is a secret which she alone can reveal to you.’ —‘ She is married, perhaps?’ —‘ She is a widow, but her heart is not the more disengaged; her ties are but too strong.’ —‘ Daughter,’ said the marquis, on entering the hut, ‘ you see that you turn the heads of the whole family of Fonrose. The extravagant passion of this young man cannot be justified but by such a prodigy as you are. All my wife’s wishes are confined to having you for a companion and a friend; this child here, will not live, unless he obtains you for his wife; I desire no less to have you for my daughter: see how many persons you will make unhappy by a refusal.’ ——‘ Ah, Sir,’ said she, ‘ your goodness confounds me, but hear and judge for me.’ Then Adelaide, in the presence of the old man and his wife, made a recital of her
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deplorable adventure. She added the name of her family, which was not unknown to the Marquis de Fonrose, and ended by calling on himself to witness the inviolable fidelity she owed her spouse. At these words consternation spread itself over every countenance. Young Fonrose, choked with sobs, threw himself into a corner of the hut, in order to give them free scope. The father, moved at the sight, flew to the assistance of his son. ‘ See,’ said he, ‘ my dear Adelaïde, to what a condition you have reduced him ! ’ Madam de Fonrose, who was near Adelaïde, pressed her in her arms, bathing her at the same time with her tears. ‘ Alas ! why, my daughter,’ said she, ‘ why will you a second time make us mourn the death of our dear child ? ’ The old man and his wife, their eyes filled with tears, and fixed upon Adelaïde, waited her speaking. ‘ Heaven is my witness,’ said Adelaïde, rising, ‘ that I would lay down my life in gratitude for such goodness. It would heighten my misfortunes to have occasion to reproach myself with yours ; but I am willing that Fonrose himself should be my judge ; suffer me, if you please, to speak to him for a moment.’ Then retiring with him alone ; ‘ Fonrose,’ said she, ‘ You know what sacred ties retain me in this place. If I could cease to love and lament a husband who loved me but too well, I should be the most despicable of women. Esteem, friendship, gratitude, are the sentiments I owe you ; but none of these can cancel love : the more you have conceived for me, the more you should expect from me ; it is the impossibility of fulfilling that duty, that hinders my imposing it on myself. At the same time I see you in a situation that would move the least sensible heart ; it is shocking to me to be the cause, it would be still more shocking to me to hear your parents accuse me with having been your destruction. I will forget myself, then, for the present, and leave you, as far as in me lies, to be the arbiter of our destiny. It is for you to chuse that of the two situations which appears to you least painful ; either to renounce me, to subdue yourself,

yourself, and forget me; or to possess a woman, whose heart being full of another object, can only grant you sentiments too feeble to satisfy the wishes of a lover.' ----' That is enough,' said Fonrose; ' and in a soul like yours, friendship should take place of love. I shall be jealous, without doubt, of the tears which you shall bestow on the memory of another husband: but the cause of that jealousy, in rendering you more respectable, will render you also more dear in my eyes.'

' She is mine !' said he, coming and throwing himself into the arms of his parents; ' it is to her respect for you, to your goodness, that I owe her, and it is owing you a second life.' From that moment their arms were chains from which Adelaïde could not disengage herself.

Did she yield only to pity, to gratitude? I would fain believe it, in order to admire her the more: Adelaïde believed so herself. However it be, before she set out, she would revisit the tomb, which she quitted but with regret. ' O, my dear D'Orestan,' said she, ' if from the womb of the dead thou canst read the bottom of my soul, thy shade has no cause to murmur at the sacrifice I make: I owe it to the generous sentiments of this virtuous family; but my heart remains thine for ever. I go to endeavour to make them happy, without any hope of being myself so.' It was not without some sort of violence they forced her from the place; but she insisted that they should erect a monument there to the memory of her husband; and that the hut of her old master and mistresses, who followed her to Turin, should be converted into a country-house, as plain as it was solitary, where she proposed to come sometimes to mourn the errors and misfortunes of her youth. Time, the assiduities of Fonrose, the fruits of her second marriage, have since opened her soul to the impressions of a new affection; and they cite her as an example of a woman, remarkable and respectable even in her infidelity.

THE HAPPY DIVORCE.

UNEASINESS and inconstancy are, in the greatest part of mankind, nothing more than the consequence of false calculation. Too strong a prepossession in favour of the happiness we desire, makes us experience, as soon as we possess it, that uneasiness and disgust which suffer us to relish nothing. The imagination deceived and the heart dissatisfied, wander to new objects, the prospect of which dazzles us in its turn, and the approach disabuses us. Thus from illusion to illusion, life is passed away in changing the chimera: this is the malady of lively and delicate souls; nature has nothing sufficiently perfect for them; whence it proceeds, that it is thought such a mighty matter to fix the taste of a pretty woman.

Lucilia, in the convent, had painted to herself the charms of love, and the delights of marriage, with the colouring of an imagination of a girl of fifteen, whose flower nothing had yet tarnished.

She had seen the world only in those ingenuous fictions which are the romance of human nature. It costs nothing to an eloquent man to give love and marriage all the charms that he conceives. Lucilia, according to these pictures, saw lovers and husbands only as they are to be met with in fables, always tender and full of love, saying nothing but fine things, taken up solely with the care of pleasing, new homages, or pleasures eternally varied.

Such was the prepossession of Lucilia, when they came to draw her out of the convent to marry the Marquis De Lisere. His engaging and noble figure inspired her with a favourable opinion of him, and his first addresses succeeded in determining the irresolution of her soul. She saw not yet in the marquis the ardour of a passionate lover; but she thought modestly enough of herself not to pretend to set him on fire at first sight. This liking, tranquil at its birth, would make a rapid progress; he must have time. However, the marriage

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was concluded upon, and solemnized before the inclination of the marquis was grown a violent passion.

Nothing was more steady or solid than the temper of the Marquis de Lisere. In marrying a young woman, he proposed to himself, in order to make her happy, to begin by being her friend, persuaded that an honest man does whatever he pleases with a well-disposed-woman, when he has gained her confidence; and that a husband who makes himself dreaded, invites his wife to deceive him, and authorises her to hate him.

In order to follow the plan which he had traced out to himself, it was necessary not to be a too passionate lover; passion knows no rule. He had considered well before his engagement, on the kind of liking with which Lucilia inspired him, resolved never to marry a woman whom he should love to distraction. Lucilia found in her husband only that lively and tender friendship, that attentive and constant complaisance, that soft and pure pleasure, that love, in short, which has neither its hot nor cold fits. At first, she flattered herself that intoxication, enchantment, transports would have their turn; but the soul of Lisere was unalterable.

'This is very extraordinary,' said she; 'I am young, handsome, and my husband does not love me! I am his, and he thinks it enough to possess me with coldness. But, then, why suffer him to be cold? Can he have any violent longings for what is in his power without reserve or trouble? He would become passionately fond of me, if he were jealous. How unjust are men! We must torment them, in order to please them. Be tender, faithful, fond, they neglect, they disdain you. An even course of happiness makes them dull: caprice, coquetry, inconstancy, rouze and enliven them; they set no value on pleasure, but in proportion to the trouble it gives them. Lisere, less sure of being beloved, will become a thousand times fonder.' That is easy, let me be in the fashion. Every thing around me presents

presents me with enough to make him uneasy, if he is capable of jealousy.'

After this fine project, Lucilia gave herself up to dissipation, to coquetry: she assumed a mystery in all her proceedings; she made parties without the marquis. 'Did I not foresee it,' said he to himself, 'that I had a wife like other women? Six months after marriage, she begins to be tired of it. I should be a happy man, now, if I were passionately fond of my wife! Happily my liking and esteem for her leave me full enjoyment of my reason: I must make use of it, dissemble, subdue myself, and employ nothing but gentleness and soothing measures, to keep her in order. They do not always succeed; but reproaches, complaints, restraint, and violence, succeed still less.' The moderation, complaisance, and tranquility of the marquis, put Lucilia out of all patience. 'Alas!' said she, 'do what I will it is all to no purpose; this man will never love me: he is one of those cold souls whom nothing moves, nothing engages; and I am condemned to pass my life with a stone, that knows neither how to love nor hate! O, the delight of sensible souls, the charm of impasioned hearts!—Love, who raisest us to Heaven on thy fiery pinions! where are those flaming darts, with which thou woundest happy lovers? where is that intoxication into which thou plungest them? where are those ravishing transports with which they mutually inspire each other?—Where are they?' continued she. 'In free and independent love, in the disposal of two hearts which give a loose to themselves. And why should the marquis be fond? What sacrifice have I made him? By what marks of courage, by what heroic devotion of myself, have I moved the sensibility of his soul? Where is the merit of having obeyed, of having accepted for a husband an amiable and rich young man, chosen without my consent? Is it for love to interfere in a marriage of convenience? But is this then the lot of a woman of sixteen, to whom, without vanity, Nature has given wherewith to please, and

still more wherewith to love? For after all, I cannot conceal from myself the graces of my figure, nor the sensibility of my heart. At sixteen, to languish without hope in cold indifference, and to see at least a score of years waste away without pleasure, which might have been delicious! I say a score, at least, and it is not desiring to tire the world, to be content to renounce it before forty years of age. Cruel family! was it for you that I took a husband? You chose me an honest man! a rare present you made me! To be dull with an honest man, and to be dull all one's life! Very hard, indeed!"

This discontent soon degenerated into peevishness; and Lisere thought he perceived, at last, that she had taken an aversion to him. His friends displeased her, their company became troublesome to her, she received them with a coolness sufficient to keep them at a distance. The marquis could no longer dissemble. "Madam," said he to Lucilia, "the end of marriage is to make people happy; we are not so, and it is in vain to pique ourselves on a constancy which restrains us. Our fortune puts us in a condition of doing without each other, and of resuming that liberty of which we imprudently made a mutual sacrifice. Live by yourself; I will live by myself. I ask towards me only that decency and regard which you owe to yourself."—"With all my heart, Sir," replied Lucilia with the coldness of disgust; and from that moment every thing was settled, that Madam might have her equipage, her table, her domestics, in one word, a separate maintenance.

Lucilia's suppers soon became ranked among the most brilliant in Paris. Her company was sought by all the handsome women and men of gallantry. But there was a necessity for Lucilia's having some particular, and he who should engage her first, it was observed, had the only hard task! In the mean time she enjoyed the honours of a brilliant set; and her heart, yet irresolute, seemed to suspend her choice only to render it more flattering. She thought, at last, she saw the person who would determine it. At the approach
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of the Count de Blamzé, all other pretenders lowered their tone. He was, of the whole court, the most to be dreaded by a young woman, it was agreed that there was no resisting him, and so they spared themselves the trouble. He was beautiful as the day, presented himself with grace, spoke little, but extremely well; and if he said common things, he rendered them interesting by the most pleasing sound of voice, and the most beautiful look in the world. They could not say that Blamzé was a fop, his foppery had so much dignity. A modest haughtiness formed his character; he decided with the gentlest air in the world, and the most laconic tone: he listened to contradictions with good humour, replied to them only with a smile; and if they pressed him to explain himself, he smiled still and kept silence, or repeated what he had said before. Never did he combat the opinion of another, never did he take any trouble to give a reason for his own: it was the most attentive politeness, and the most decisive presumption that had ever yet been united in a young man of quality.

This assurance had something commanding in it, which rendered him the oracle of taste, and the legislator of fashion. They were never sure of being right in the choice of a suit, or the colour of a carriage, till Blamzé had approved by a glance. ‘*It is excellent, it is handsome!*’ were the precious words from his mouth; and his silence a dead warrant. The despotism of his opinion extended even over beauty, talents, wit, and graces. In a circle of women, she whom he had honoured with a particular attention was that instant in vogue.

Blamzé’s reputation had gone before him to Lucia’s; but the deference which even his rivals paid him, redoubled the esteem she had conceived for him. She was dazzled with his beauty, and still more surprized at his modesty. He presented himself with the most respectful air, seated himself in the lowest place, but all looks were soon directed towards him. His dress

Was the model of taste: all the young people who surrounded him studied it with a scrupulous attention. His laces, his embroidery, his manner of dressing his head, were all examined: they wrote down the names of his trades-people and workmen, ‘It is strange,’ said they, ‘we see these designs, these colours, nowhere else!’ Blamzé confessed modestly, that it cost him very little trouble. ‘Industry,’ said he, ‘is at its highest perfection; you need but to enlighten and direct it.’ He took a pinch of snuff as he said these words, and his box excited new curiosity; it was, however, the work of a young artist whom Blamzé had drawn from his obscurity. They asked him the price of every thing; he replied with a smile, that he knew the price of none of them; and the women whispered in each other’s ear the name of the female who took these matters under her care.’

‘I am ashamed, Madam,’ said Blamzé to Lucilia, ‘that these trifles should engage the attention which ought to centre in a more interesting object. Pardon me if I listen to the frivolous questions of these young men: never did complaisance cost me so dear. I hope,’ added he in a low voice, ‘that you will permit me to come and make myself amends in some more tranquil moment.’—‘I shall be very glad to see you,’ replied Lucilia blushing, and by her blushes, and the tender smile with which Blamzé accompanied a most respectful bow, the assembly judged that it would not be long before matters came to a conclusion. Lucilia, who did not see the consequence of a few words said in her ear, and who did not think that she had made an assignation, scarce paid any attention to the meaning looks which the women cast on each other, or the light railleuries which escaped the men. She delivered herself up insensibly to her own reflections, and was quite grave the whole evening. They often turned the conversation on Blamzé; all the company spoke well of him: his rivals talked of him with esteem; Lucilia’s rivals spoke of him with complaisance. Nobody was more gentle,

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more gallant, more respectful; and of twenty women, on whole account he had reason to pride himself, not one had any reason to complain. Lucilia became attentive: nothing escaped her. ‘ Twenty women?’ said she within herself; ‘ that is much: but where is the wonder? He seeks one who may be worthy to fix him, and capable of fixing herself.’

She hoped the next day that he would come early, and before the crowd of visitors: she waited for him; she grew uneasy; he never came; she was out of temper: he writ; she read his billet, and her ill-humour ceas'd. He was distract'd to lose the most agreeable moments of his life. Some impertinents had broke in upon him, he would have made his escape; but these impertinents were people of rank. It was not in his power to be happy till the next day; but he beseeched Lucilia to receive him early, ‘ To abridge,’ said he, ‘ by a few hours, the cruel weariness of absence.’ The company came as usual, and Lucilia received them with a coldness at which they were piqued. ‘ We shall not have Blamzé this evening,’ said Claiissa, with a disconsolate air, ‘ he goes to sup at Araminta’s little box.’ At these words Lucilia turned pale, and the gaiety which reigned around her only served to redouble the grief which she endeavoured to dissemble. Her first emotion was, not to see the perfidious man more. But Claiissa wanted, perhaps, either out of malice or jealousy, to impute a wrong to him of which he was not guilty. It was after all engaging herself to nothing, to see him once more; and before condemning him, it was but just to hear him.

While she was yet at her toilette, Blamzé arrives in an undress, but the most elegant undress in the world. Lucilia was a little surprized to see a man whom she scarce knew appear in a dishabille; yet if he had given himself time to dress, perhaps she would have been sorry for it. But he said so many handsome things to her on the freshness of her complexion, the beauty of her hair, the brilliancy of her morning appearance, that she had not

not the courage to complain. However, Araminta did not go out of her head ; but it would not have been decent to appear jealous so soon ; and one reproof might betray her. She contented herself with asking him what he had done with himself the evening before. ‘ What did I do with myself ! Do I know myself ? O, how troublesome the world is ! How happy are we in being forgotten and far from the crowd, in being devoted to one’s self, and the person we love ! Follow my advice, Lucilia, get out of this whirlwind : the more repose, the more liberty, as soon as we give ourselves up to it. Now I have mentioned the whirlwind, what do you with all these young fellows who pay court to you ? They dispute with each other the conquest of you : have you vouchsafed to make a choice ? ’ The easy familiarity of Blamzé had at first astonished Lucilia ; this question entirely confounded her. ‘ I am impertinent, perhaps,’ returned Blamzé, who perceived it. ‘ Not at all,’ replied Lucilia, with gentleness, ‘ I have nothing to conceal, and I am not afraid that any body should see through me. I amuse myself with the levity of these giddy young fellows, but not one of them seems to me worthy of a serious attachment.’ Blamzé spoke of his rivals with indulgence, and thought that Lucilia judged too severely of them. ‘ Cleon, for example,’ said he, ‘ has something very amiable in him ; he knows nothing as yet ; it is a pity, for he speaks well enough of things which he is ignorant of, and he is a proof to me, that with wit one may dispense with common sense. Clairfont is a coxcomb ; but it is the first fife of his age, and he only wants to be disciplined by a woman who has seen life. Pomblac’s disposition pronounces him a man of sentiment ; and that simplicity which looks so like silliness, would please me well enough if I were a woman : some coquette will make her advantage of him. Little Linval is conceited, but when he has been supplanted five or six times, people will not be surprized to see him grown modest. At present,’ continued Blamzé, ‘ none of all these will suit you ; we behold you therefore

fore, free : what use do you make of your freedom ?'—‘I endeavour to enjoy it,’ replied Lucilia. ‘That is mere childishness’ resumed the count: ‘we never enjoy our freedom but in the moment when we renounce it; and ought not to preserve it with care, but in order to lose it at a proper opportunity. You are young, you are handsome : do not flatter yourself with being long disengaged : if you will not resign your heart, it will resign itself; but among those who may pretend to it, it is of importance to make a right choice. As soon as you love, and even when you do not love, you will be beloved infallibly : that is not the point ; but at your age women have need of finding in a lover, a counsellor, a guide, a friend, a man formed by the custom of the world, and able to enlighten you in respect to the dangers you are going to run in it.’—‘A man like yourself, for example !’ said Lucilia, in an ironical tone, and with a sneering smile. ‘Yes, indeed,’ continued Blamzé ; ‘I should do pretty well for your purpose, were it not for all this multitude that besiege me ; but how to disengage myself from it.’—‘Why do not disengage yourself from it at all,’ replied Lucilia ; you would excite too many complaints, and make me too many enemies.’—

‘As to complaints,’ said the count, coldly, ‘I am accustomed to them : as to enemies, one never gives one’s self the least concern about them, when one has cause to be satisfied, and the good sense to live for one’s self.’—‘At my age,’ said Lucilia, smiling, ‘we are still too timorous, and though there were nothing farther to experience in it than the despair of an Araminta, that alone would make me tremble.’—‘An Araminta,’ replied Blamzé, without any emotion. ‘Araminta is a good creature who hears reason, and who does not give herself up to despair : I see somebody has been talking to you of her ; you shall have the whole account of my connections with her. Araminta is one of those beauties, who seeing themselves on the decline, that they may not fall into oblivion, and to revive their expiring consequence, have occasion from time to time to make some

some noise in the world. She has engaged me to pay her some small attentions, and to behave to her with some warmth. It would not have been handsome to refuse her, so I made myself subservient to her views. In order to give the more celebrity to our adventure, she has thought proper to take a little box. It was in vain that I represented to her that it was not worth while for a month at most which I had to bestow on her: the box was furnished without my knowledge, and in the handsomest manner; she made me promise, and there lay the grand point, to sup with her there with an air of mystery; yesterday was the day appointed. Araminta, for the greater secrecy, invited nobody there but five of her female friends, and permitted me to carry only the like number of my friends. I went; assumed an air of pleasure: was gallant and warm towards her: In a word, I let all the guests go away, and did not retire myself till half an hour after them; this was all, in my opinion that decorum required: and accordingly Araminta was charmed with me. It was sufficient to bring her again into vogue: and I may henceforth take my leave of her whenever I please, without fear of reproach. This, Madam, is my manner of conducting myself. The reputation of a woman is as dear to me as my own; nay, more: it costs me nothing to make a sacrifice to her glory of my own vanity. The greatest misfortune to a woman who sets up for a beauty, is to be forsaken; I never forsake them; I leave myself to be discharged, I pretend even to be inconsolable at it, and sometimes I have shut myself up three days successively without seeing any body, in order to leave the lady from whom I had detached myself all the honour of the rupture. You see, beautiful Lucilia, that the men are not all as bad as they say, and that there are still among us principles and morals.'

Lucilia, who had read only the romances of time past, was not at all accustomed to this new style, and her surprize redoubled at every syllable. 'What, Sir?' said she; 'is this what you call principles and morals?'

morals?'—‘ Yes, Madam; but this is rare, and the singular reputation which my proceedings have acquired ~~are~~, does no great honour to the rest of our youth. Upon honour, the more I think on it, the more I wish, for your own interest, that you had somebody like me.’—‘ I flatter myself,’ said Lucilia, ‘ that I shall be treated as tenderly as another, and that, at least, I shall not experience the shock of being forsaken.’—‘ You are merry, Madam; but, to be serious, you deserve a person who thinks, and knows how to develope those qualities of heart and understanding, which I think I have discovered in you. Lisere is a good man; but he never knew how to make the most of his wife; and in general the desire of pleasing a husband is not strong enough, to induce a woman to give herself the trouble of being amiable to him to a certain degree. Happily, he leaves you at your own pleasure; and you would not be worthy of so reasonable a procedure, if you should lose the most precious time of your life in indolence or dissipation.’—‘ I am not afraid,’ said Lucilia, ‘ of falling into any of these excesses.’—‘ We see, however, nothing else in the world.’—‘ True, Sir; and that is the reason why I should be difficult in my choice, if I had any design of making one: for I think there is no excuse for an attachment, but that it is solid and durable.’—‘ What, Lucilia! at your age would you pique yourself upon constancy? Really, if I thought so, I should be capable of committing a folly.’—‘ And that folly would be—’ ‘ To grow prudent, and attach myself in good earnest.’—‘ Seriously! would you have the courage?’—‘ Upon my credit, I am a little fearful of it, if you would have me own the truth.’—‘ A strange declaration!’—‘ It is a little ill expressed; but I beg you will pardon me: it is the first in my life.’—‘ The first, say you?’—‘ Yes, Madam: hitherto they have had the modesty to spare me the trouble of making advances; but I see plainly that I grow old.’—‘ Well, Sir, for the novelty of the thing, I pardon you this first

first essay : I will do more still, I will confess to you, that it cannot displease me.'---' That is happiness indeed ! Do you give me leave to love you ; and will you do me the honour to love me too ?'---' Ah ! that is another thing ; time shall shew me whether you deserve it.'---' Look at me, Lucilia.'---' I do look at you.'---' And do not you laugh ?'---' What should I laugh at ?'---' At your own answer. Do you take me for a child ?'---' I talk reasonably to you, I think.'---' And it is in order to talk reasonably to me, that you have done me the honour to grant me a *tête à tête*?'---I did not think, that in order to be reasonable, we had need of witnesses ; after all, what have I said to you, which you ought not to have expected ? I find in you graces, wit, an engaging and noble air.'---' You are very good.'---' But that is not enough 'to merit my confidence, and determine my inclination.'---' Not enough, Madam ! excuse me a little. Please to inform me, what you would require more ?'---' A more thorough knowledge of your temper, a more intimate persuasion of your sentiments for me. I promise you nothing. I forbid myself nothing ; you have every thing to hope, but nothing to claim : you are to consider whether that suits you.'---' No price, without doubt, beautiful Lucilia, should be thought too dear to merit and obtain you : but seriously, would you have me renounce all the charms of the world to have my happiness depend on an uncertain contingency ? I am, you know, and I am not conceited of it, I am the man the most sought after in all France ; be it taste or fancy, it is no matter ; it is her concern that should have me, though but for a time.'---' You are right,' said Lucilia ; ' I was unreasonable, and your moments are too precious.'---' No, I confess to you seriously, that I am tired of being in fashion ; I was looking out for an object that might fix me : I have found it ; I attach myself : nothing can be more fortunate ; but still this ought not to be to no purpose. You would have time for reflection ; I give you twenty-four hours : I think

I think that is very handsome, and I never gave so much time before.'---' My reflections are too slow,' replied Lucilia, 'and you are too much in a hurry for us to agree on this point. I am young, perhaps have sensibility; but my age and sensibility shall never engage me in an imprudent step. I have told you, if my heart yields, time, proofs, reflection, the pleasing habitude of confidence and esteem, will have decided its choice.'-----' Madam, in good earnest, now do you think to find an amiable man sufficiently disengaged to lose his time in spinning out an intrigue to this length? and do you yourself intend to pass your youth in consulting whether you shall love or no?'---' I cannot tell,' replied Lucilia, 'whether I shall ever love, nor what time I shall employ in resolving: but that time will not be lost, if it spares me regret.'-----' I admire you, Madam; I admire you!' said Blamzé, taking his leave; 'but I have not the honour to be of the ancient order of chivalry, and I did not come here so early to compose a romance with you.'

Lucilia thunderstruck at the scene which she had just had with Blamzé, passed in a short time from astonishment to reflection. 'Is this, then, said she, the man in vogue, the most amiable man in the world? He condescends to think me handsome; and if he believed me capable of constancy, he would be guilty of the folly of loving me in good earnest; but yet he has not time to wait till I have consulted myself. I must seize the moment of pleasing him, and determine in twenty-four hours: he never gave so much time before. Do the women, then, humble themselves thus, and the men thus prescribe them the condition? happily he has made himself known to me. Under that modest air which had seduced me, what conceit, what presumption! Ah! I see, the most mortifying evil to a woman, is that of loving a fop.'

The same day after the opera, Lucilia's company being met together, Pomblac came to tell her, with an air of mystery, that she would have neither Blamzé

nor Clairfont to sup with her. ‘ Very well,’ said she, ‘ I require not of my friends any assiduity that constrains them : there are even such people whose assiduity would constrain me.’—‘ If Blamzé be of that number,’ replied Pomblac frankly, ‘ Clairfont has delivered you from him, at least for some time.’—‘ How so ?’—‘ Do not be frightened : all is very well over.’—‘ How, Sir, what is over ?’—‘ After the opera, the curtain being dropped, we were on the stage, and, according to custom, hearing Blamzé deciding on every thing. Having given us his opinion on the singing, the dancing, and the decorations, he asked us, if we were to sup at the little marchioness’s : (pardon me, Madam, it was you he spoke of.) We replied, “ Yes.”—“ I shall not be there,” said he ; “ we are in the pouts since this morning.” I asked what might be the cause of these pouts. Blamzé told us that you had made him an assignation ; that he never came ; that you were piqued at it ; that he had made up that this morning ; that you played the child ; that he was in a hurry to conclude ; that you had demanded time for reflection ; and that, tired out with your *ifs* and your *but*s, he had left you in the lurch. He told us, that you wanted to set off with a serious engagement ; that he had some inclination to it ; but that he had not time enough on his hands ; that, on calculating the strength of the citadel, he had judged that it might sustain a siege ; but that nothing would do for him but a surprise. “ It is an exploit that may suit some of you,” added he ; “ you are young, it is the time when one loves to encounter difficulties, in order to overcome them ; but I forewarn you, that virtue is her fort, and sensibility her weak part : every thing was concluded, if I had taken the trouble to play the passionate lover !” I was fully persuaded that he lied, resumed the young man, but I had the prudence to be silent. Clairfont was not so patient as I : he signified to him, that he did not believe one word of his story ; and at this declaration they went out together. I followed them.

Clairfont

Clairfont received a wound'----' And Blamzé----?' " Blamzé has two, of which he will not recover without some difficulty. While I helped him to get into his coach, " If Clairfont," said he, " knows how to make an advantage of this adventure, he will carry Lucilia. A woman defends herself but ill against a man who defends her so well. Tell him that I dispense with this being a secret to her ; it is just that she should know what she owes to her knight." Lucilia had all the difficulty in the world to conceal the trouble and consternation which this story gave her. She feigned a head-ache, and it is well known that a head-ache, in a handsome woman, is a civil way of dismissing importunates : so they left her alone at their rising from table.

Delivered up to herself, Lucilia could not console herself for having been the subject of a duel, which would make her the town talk. She was strongly touched by the warmth with which Clairfont had revenged the affront offered her ; but what an humiliation to her if this adventure should make a noise, and Lisere should be informed of it ? Happily the secret was kept. Pomblac and Clairfont made a point of saving Lucilia's honour ; and Blamzé, being cured of his wounds, was far from boasting of an imprudence by which he had been so severely punished. It will be asked, perhaps, how a man, till then so discreet, came all of a sudden to cease to be so. It is because we are under less temptation to publish favours which we obtain, than to avenge ourselves for the rigours we undergo. This first indiscretion had like to have cost him his life. He was for a month on the brink of the grave. Clairfont had less difficulty to get his wound cured, and Lucilia saw him again with a tenderness hitherto unknown to him. If we attach ourselves to any one who has exposed his life for us, we attach ourselves as naturally to the person for whom we have exposed our life ; and such services, perhaps, are stronger ties to the person who has performed them, than to the party for whom they were performed. Clairfont then be-

came desperately in love with Lucilia; but the more she owed him in return, the less he dared to require any thing of her; he found a sensible pleasure in being generous, and he ceased to be so if he availed himself of the rights he had required to Lucilia's gratitude: accordingly, he was more timorous than if he had merited nothing; but Lucilia read his soul, and this delicacy took the strongest hold of her. In the mean time, the fear of appearing to want gratitude, or the dread of carrying it too far, made her dissemble her knowledge of the intelligence Poinblac had given her; thus the good-will she testified towards Clairfont appeared free and disinterested, and he was so much the more affected by it. Their mutual inclination every day made a sensible progress. They sought one another with their eyes, conferred with intimacy, listened to each other with complaisance, gave one another an account of their proceedings, in reality, without affectation, and, as it were, for the sake of saying something; but with so much exactness, that they knew, almost to a minute, the hour at which they were to see each other again. Clairfont insensibly became more familiar, and Lucilia less reserved. Nothing remained but to explain themselves; for which purpose there was no need of those marvellous incidents which love sometimes sends to the assistance of bashful lovers. One day that they were alone, Lucilia let her fan drop; Clairfont picks it up, and presents it to her; she receives it with a pleasing smile; that smile inspires the lover with the courage to kiss her hand; that hand was the most beautiful hand in the world; and from the moment that Clairfont's lips were applied to it, she was unable to withdraw it. Lucilia, in her emotion, made a slight effort to draw back her hand; he opposed a gentle violence, and his eyes tenderly fixed on Lucilia's eyes, entirely disarmed her. Their looks had expressed every thing before their tongues interfered; and the mutual confession of their love was made and returned in two words. 'I breathe, we love!' said Clairfont, intoxicated

intoxicated with joy. ‘ Alas! yes, we do love!’ replied Lucilia, with a profound sigh; ‘ it is no longer time to deny it. But remember that I am bound by duties; those duties are inviolable; and, if I am dear to you, they will be sacred.’

Lucilia’s inclination was not one of those fashionable passions which stifle shame in their infancy, and Clairfont respected it too much to take advantage of it as a ~~wakness~~. Transported with being loved, he for a long time confined his desires to the delicious possession of a heart pure, virtuous, and faithful. ‘ How little we love,’ said he to himself in his delirium, ‘ when we are not made happy by the single pleasure of loving! Who was the stupid savage who first branded with the name of rigour that resistance which timid modesty opposes to wild desire? Is there, beautiful Lucilia, is there a denial which your looks would not soften? Can I complain when you smile upon me? And has my soul any wishes still to form, when my eyes draw from yours that heavenly voluptuousness with which you intoxicate all my senses? Far be from us, I consent to it, all those pleasures followed by regrets, which would trouble the serenity of your life. I respect your virtue as much as you cherish it yourself; and I should never pardon myself the having caused any remorse to spring up in the bosom of innocence itself.’ Sentiments so heroic charmed Lucilia; and Clairfont, more tender every day, was every day more beloved, more happy, and more worthy to be so. But at length the railleries of his friends, and the suspicions they excited in him with respect to that virtue which he adored, embittered his happiness. He became gloomy, uneasy, jealous; every thing vexed him, every thing gave him umbrage. Lucilia every day perceived her chain become closer and heavier; every day there were new complaints to hear, new reproaches to undergo. Every man that she received with civility was a rival whom she must banish. The first sacrifices that he required were made without opposition; he demanded new ones, he ob-

tained them ; he wanted still more, she was weary of obeying him. Clairfont imagined he saw in Lucilia's impatience an invincible attachment to the connections which he prohibited ; and that love, at first so delicate and submissive, became fierce and tyrannical. Lucilia was terrified ; she sought to appease him, but to no purpose. ' I will not believe,' said the imperious Clairfont, ' I will not believe that you love me till you live for me alone, as I do for you. What ! if I profess, if I fill your soul, what do you do with this troublesome crowd ? Ought it to cost you any thing to banish what afflicts me ? Would it cost me any pain to renounce every thing that would displease you ? What do I say ? Is it not a continual violence that I do myself to see any thing but Lucilia ? Would to Heaven we were freed from this crowd, which besiegés you, and which deprives me every moment either of your looks or your thoughts ! The solitude that so terrifies you would compleat all my wishes. Are not our souls of the same nature ? or the love which you think you feel, is it not the same that I feel ? You complain that I demand sacrifices of you ! Require, Lucilia, require in your turn ; chuse the most painful, the most grievous trials ; you shall see whether I hesitate. There is no connection which I would not break, no effort which I would not make ; or rather I should not make any. The pleasure of gratifying you will make me amends, will serve instead of every thing ; and what they call denials would be to me enjoyments.' — ' You think so, Clairfont,' replied the tender and ingenuous Lucilia, ' but you deceive yourself. Each of these denials is but little ; but altogether make up a great deal. It is the continuance of them that is tiresome : you have made me know by experience, that no complaisance is inexhaustible.' While she spoke thus, Clairfont's eyes, sparkling with impatience, were sometimes turned up to heaven, and sometimes fixed on her. ' Believe me,' continued Lucilia, ' the sacrifices of true love are made in the heart, and under the veil of mystery

mystery : self-love alone demands public ones ; to that victory is little ; it aspires to the honours of a triumph ; and that is what you exact.'

' What a cold analysis,' cried he, ' and what vain metaphysics ! Love, to be sure, reasons thus ! I love you, Madam ; nothing, to my misfortune, is truer ; I would sacrifice a thousand lives to please you ; and whatever may be this sentiment which you call self-love, it detaches me from the whole world to deliver myself up to you ; but in abominating myself thus, I would possess you in the same manner. Cleon, Linval, Pomblac, all these are sufficient to make me uneasy : I cannot answer for myself. After this, if you love me, nothing ought to be more precious to you than my repose ; and my uneasiness, were it even a folly, you ought to dissipate. But why do I say a folly ? You render my alarms and suspicions but too reasonable. And how should I be easy, when I see that every one who comes near you engages you more than myself ?'

' Ah, Sir ! what acknowledgements do I owe you ?' said Lucilia with a sigh ; ' you make me see the depth of the abyss into which love was going to plunge me. Yes, I see that there is no slavery comparable to that which a jealous lover imposes.'—' I, Madam ! do I make you a slave ? Have not even you an absolute empire over me ? do not you do what you please with me ?'—' Enough, Sir : I have suffered a long time ; I flattered myself ; but you now draw me out of my illusion, and nothing can lead me into it again. Be my friend, if you can be so : it is the only title that remains to you with me.'—' Ah, cruel woman ! would you have my death ?'—' I want nothing but your ease and my own.'—' You overwhelm me. What is my crime ?'—' Loving yourself too well, and not esteeming me enough.'—' Ah ! I swear to you—' ' Swear nothing : your jealousy is a vice in your disposition, and the disposition never corrects itself. I know you, Clairfont ; I begin to dread you, and cease to love you.'

you. This very instant I see my frankness makes you desperate; but of two punishments I chuse the shortest; and by taking away from you the right of being jealous, I create you the happy necessity of ceasing to be so.'—'I know you in my turn,' replied Clairfont with a stifled rage: the delicacy of a sensible soul ill agrees with the levity of yours; it is a Blamzé that you must have for a lover, and I was a fool to take it ill'—'Go no farther, interrupted Lucilia. 'I know all that I owe to you; but I retire, to spare you the shame of having reproached me with it.'

Clairfont went off in a rage, and fully resolved never more to revisit a woman whom he had so tenderly loved, and who had dismissed him with so much inhumanity.

Lucilia, restored to herself, found herself, as it were, relieved from a burden that overwhelmed her. But, on one side, the dangers of love, which she had just experienced, on the other, the sad prospect of everlasting indifference, suffered her to hope hereafter for nothing but cruel disquietudes, or insupportable dulness. 'What,' said she, has Heaven given me a sensible heart, only to make me the sport of a fop, the victim of a tyrant, or the gloomy companion of a kind of philosopher, neither affected nor moved at any thing!' These reflections plunged her into a languor which she was not able to conceal: her company perceived it, and became soon as melancholy as herself. The women, to whom her house was a rendezvous, were alarmed at it. 'She is lost,' said they, 'if we draw her not out of this sad state; she is disgusted with the world: she loves nothing but solitude; the symptoms of her melancholy become every day more terrible; and, by the force of some violent passion which agitates her, it is to be feared that she will fall again into the power of her husband. Do we know nobody to turn this young head? Blamzé himself set about it the wrong way, and did not succeed: as to Clairfont, on whom we depended, he is a little fool who loves like a madman; no wonder she should

should be affronted.'—' Hold,' said Cephisa, after being lost in thought for some time, ' Lucilia has a romantic way of thinking ; she must have something in the fairy taste, and the magnificent Dorimon is exactly the man that suits her. She will grow mad for him, I am sure ; let us engage him only to go and invite her to supper at his fine country-house : I will take upon me to give him his lesson.' The party was accepted, and Dorimon made acquainted with it.

Dorimon, was the man in the world who knew best the most able artists, received them with the best grace, and recompensed them most liberally ; accordingly, he had the reputation of a connoisseur, and a man of taste.

If, some centuries hence, this tale should be read, they may imagine it mere fiction, and the habitation I am going to describe may pass for a fairy castle ; but it is not my fault if the luxury of our times come into competition with the marvellous of fables, and if, in the representation of our follies, probability should be wanting to truth.

On the rich banks of the Seine arises, in form of an amphitheatre, a small eminence exposed to the first rays of the morning, and the ardent fires of noon. The forest which crowns it, defends it from the chilling blast of the north, and the watry influence of the west. From the summit of the hill fall in cascades three copious springs of water purer than chrystral, which the industrious hand of art has conducted by a thousand windings over green slopes. Sometimes these waters divide themselves, and glide along in meanders ; sometimes they re-unite in basons, in which the heavens behold themselves with delight ; then they precipitate themselves, and pour along, dashing against rocks cut out into grottoes in which the chizzel has imitated the fanciful varieties of nature. The Seine, which forms a bow at the foot of the hill, receives them into his peaceable bosom ; and their fall recalls to our minds those fabulous times in which the nymphs of the fountains descended

scended into the humid palace of the rivers, to temper the ardours of youth and love.

An ingenious whimsicalness seems to have designed the gardens watered by these streams. All sides of this smiling scene agree without sameness; the very symmetry is striking; the eye roves without lassitude, and reposes without dulness. A noble elegance, a richness well managed, a bold and yet delicate taste, have been employed in embellishing them. Nothing is neglected, nothing forced or laboured with too much art. The concourse of simple beauties forms all its magnificence; and the equilibrium of masses, joined to the variety of forms, produces that beautiful harmony which forms the delight of beholders.

Groves ornamented with statues, lattice-work fashioned into arbours and bowers, decorate all the known gardens; but these riches displayed without understanding and taste, generally excite nothing more than a cold and dull admiration, soon attended with satiety. Here the disposition and connection of the parts form, of a thousand different sensations, but one continued enchantment. The second object that is discovered adds to the pleasure raised by the first; and both are still farther embellished by the charms of the new object that succeeds without effacing them.

This delicious landscape is terminated by a palace of such airy architecture, that the Corinthian order itself has less elegance and lightness. Here the columns imitated the palm-trees united in arbours. The roof of the vault, formed of palms, composis a chapitre more natural and as noble as the vase of Callimachus. These palms were interwoven among each other in the interstices of the columns, and their natural wreathings concealed from the deceived eye the heaviness of the entablature. As these columns are sufficient for the weight of the edifice, they leave continued transparency to the walls, by means of chasms artfully contrived. We see none of those double roofs which crush our modern archi-

architecture : and the frightful irregularity of our Gothic chimnies is lost in the crown-work.

The interior luxury of the palace is suitable to the magnificence without. It is, in short, the temple of the arts and of taste. The pencil, the chizzel, the graving tool, every thing that industry has invented for the delicacies of life, is there displayed with a discreet profusion ; and the Pleasures, the daughters of Opulence, there flatter the soul through all the senses.

Lucilia was dazzled with so much magnificence ; the first evening appeared to her a dream ; it was nothing but one continued scene of shews and feastings, of which she plainly perceived herself was the divinity. The earnestness, the vivacity, the gallantry with which Dorimon did the honours of this beautiful dwelling, the changes of scene which he produced with one single look, the absolute empire which he seemed to exercise over the arts and pleasures, recalled to Lucilia's imagination every thing that she read of the most celebrated enchanters. She dare not trust her eyes, and even thought herself enchanted. If Dorimon had availed himself of the intoxication into which she was plunged, the dream perhaps had ended after the manner of modern romances. But Dorimon was merely gallant ; and all he had the courage to permit himself to do, was to ask Lucilia to come sometimes and embellish his hermitage, for so he called his mansion.

Lucilia's companions had observed her with attention. The most experienced judged that Dorimon was too much taken up with his magnificence, and too little with his happiness. ' He ought,' said they, ' to have seized the first moment of surprize : it is a kind of transport which we do not feel twice.'

In the mean time, Lucilia's head being filled with all that she had just seen, she formed to herself the most wonderful idea of Dorimon himself. So much gallantry bespoke an imagination brisk and sprightly, a cultivated genius, a delicate taste, and a lover, if ever there was one, wholly taken up with the care of pleasing.

ing. This portrait, though a little too flattering, was not wholly unlike. Dorimon was yet young, of an engaging figure, and a most joyous temper. His wit was all in sallies : he had in his way of thinking little warmth, but much refinement. Nobody said more gallant things ; but he had not the gift of enforcing them : every body loved to hear him, but nobody believed him. He was the most seducing man in the world for a coquette, the least dangerous to a woman of sentiment.

She consented to see him again at his own house, and this gave occasion to new entertainments. But in vain had the gallantry of Dorimon re-assembled there all the pleasures which she had given birth to ; in vain were these pleasures varied every instant with as much art as taste : Lucilia was at first slightly moved, soon after fatiated ; and before the close of the day, she conceived it possible to grow dull in this delicious abode. Dorimon, who never quitted her, exerted all the talents of pleasing ; he held her in discourse on a thousand ingenious subjects, he mingled also some soft things with them ; but still this was not what she had conceived. She thought to find a god, and Dorimon was but a man ; the pomp of his house eclipsed him ; proportions were not observed ; and Dorimon, while he surpassed himself, was all the while inferior to the idea which every thing around him inspired.

He was very far from suspecting the injury which this comparison did him in the imagination of Lucilia, and he waited only one happy moment to avail himself of his advantages. After the concert, and before supper, he led her, as it were by chance, into a solitary closet, where she might go, he said, and ruminate, when she should have any moments of pouting. The door opens, and Lucilia sees her image reflected a thousand times in the dazzling pier-glasses ; the voluptuous paintings with which the pannels were covered, multiplied themselves around her. Lucilia admiring herself thought she beheld the goddess of loves. At this sight an exclamation of surprize and admiration escaped her, and

Dorimon

Dorimon seized the instant of this sudden emotion. ‘Reign here; there is your throne,’ said he to her, shewing her a sofa, which the hand of fairies had sown with flowers. ‘My throne!’ said Lucilia, seating herself, and with a tone of gaiety; ‘well, aye, I like it pretty well, and I find myself the queen of a mighty pretty people.’ She spoke of the multitude of Loves which she perceived in the glasses. ‘Amidst these subjects, will you condescend, Madam, to admit me,’ said Dorimon with ardour, and throwing himself at her feet. ‘Ah! as to you,’ said she, with a serious air, ‘you are no child;’ and at these words she would have got up, but he retained her with a strong hand, and the effort she made to escape rendered him still bolder. ‘Where am I then?’ said she with terror: ‘let me go; let me go, I say! or my cries-----’ These words awed him. ‘Excuse, Madam,’ said he, ‘an imprudence, of which you are yourself in some measure the cause. To come here tête-à-tête, and repose yourself on this sofa as you have done, is giving to understand, according to the received custom, that a little violence would not be ill-taken. With you I see plainly that it means nothing; we misunderstand each other.’—‘O very much,’ said Lucilia, going out in a rage; and Dorimon followed her, a little confounded at his mistake. Happily their absence had not been long enough to give time for slander to speak ill of it. Lucilia dissembling her perturbation, told the company that she had just been seeing a very fine cabinet. They ran there in a body; and their exclamations of admiration were only interrupted by the coming in of supper.

The sumptuousness of this feast seemed to improve still upon all the pleasures that they had tasted. But Dorimon endeavoured in vain to do the honours of it; he had lost that gaiety which was so natural to him; and Lucilia replied to the gallant things they addressed to her, in order to draw her out of her reverie, only by a forced smile, with which good-breeding endeavours to disguise ill-humour.

'There,' said her friends to her, on going home with her, 'there now is a man who suits you: with him life is a continual enchantment; it appears as if all the pleasures obeyed his voice; the moment he commands, they arrive in troops.'

'There are some,' said Lucilia coldly, 'which cannot be commanded: they are above riches; we find them only in our hearts.'—'Upon my word, my dear,' said Cephisa to her, 'you are very difficult.'—'Yes, Madam, very difficult,' replied she with a sigh: and during the rest of the journey they kept a profound silence. 'This is nothing but a handsome woman spoiled,' said her friends, at quitting her; yet if her whims were cheerful ones, we might amuse ourselves with them: but nothing in the world is more gloomy. It was worth while indeed to separate from her husband, to be a prude to the rest of the world!'

'Is this then the world so much boasted of?' said Lucilia, on her side; I have passed rapidly through every thing agreeable in it; what have I found? a coxcomb, a jealous lover, a vain man, who arrogates to himself, as so many charms, his gardens, his palace, and his entertainments, and who thinks that the severest virtue can desire no better than to yield to him. Ah, how I hate those makers of romances, who have lulled me with their fables! My imagination filled with a thousand chimeras, I thought my husband insipid; and yet he is worth more than all I have seen. He is plain: but is not his plainness a thousand times preferable to the vain pretensions of a Blamzé? He is temperate in his affections, and what would become of me, if he were violent and passionate like Clairfont? He loved me little, but he loved only me; and if I had been reasonable, he loved me enough to make me happy. I had not with him those pompous and noisy pleasures which intoxicate at first, and soon after cloy: but his complaisance, his sweetnets, his delicate attentions, furnished me every moment with pleasures, the most pure and solid, if I had but known how to relish

lish them. Fool that I was ! I pursued illusions, and fled happiness itself : it is placed in the silence of the passions, the equilibrium and repose of the soul. But, alas ! it is a fine time to acknowledge my errors, when they have made me lose the friendship, the confidence, perhaps the esteem, of my husband. Thank Heaven, I have nothing to reproach myself with but the indiscretions of my age.—But is Lisere obliged to believe me in this point, and would he vouchsafe to hear me ?—Ah, how difficult is it to return to one's duty, when we have once abandoned it ?—Difficult ! and why ? Who hinders me ? The dread of being humbled.—But Lisere is a good man ; and if he has spared me in my errors, would he distress me in my reformation ? I have but to detach myself from a pernicious society, to live at home with such of my female friends as my husband respects, and whom I can see without blushing. All the while that he has seen me delivered up to the world, he has never come near me ; but if he sees me restored to myself, he will condescend, perhaps, to recall me to him ; and if his heart be not restored to me, the only consolation that remains to me, is that of rendering myself worthy of it : I shall be at least reconciled to myself, if I cannot be so to my husband.'

Lisere, full of grief, had kept sight of her through all her whirl of company : he depended on the justness of her way of thinking, and the probity of her soul. ' She will perceive,' said he, ' the frivolousness of the pleasures which she seeks, the folly of the women, the vanity of the men, the falsity of both ; and, if she returns virtuous, her virtue will be but the more confirmed by the dangers it has run. But will she have escaped all the shelves that surround her, the charms of flattery, the snares of seduction, the attractions of pleasure ? We despise the world when we know it thoroughly ; but we give ourselves up to it before we know it, and the heart is frequently lost before reason enlightens it. O Lucilia !' cried he, looking at the portrait of his wife, which in solitude was his only consolation ; ' O

Lucilia! you were so deserving of being happy! and I flattered myself that you would be so with me. Alas! perhaps some one of those handsome corrupters, who form at once the ornament and misfortune of the world, is at this very time employed in seducing her innocence, and is bent upon her defeat, merely for the pleasure of boasting of it. What, would my wife's shame raise an eternal barrier between us! It would no longer be permitted me to live with her, from whom death alone ought to separate me! I have betrayed her in abandoning her. Heaven had chosen me for the guardian of her imprudent and frail youth. I have consulted only custom, and I have been struck only by the frightful idea of being hated as a tyrant.

While Lisere floated thus in this cruel uncertainty, Lucilia was not less agitated between the desire of returning, and the dread of being repulsed. Twenty times had she risen, after passing the night in sighs and tears, with the resolution of going to wait his rising, in order to throw herself at his feet, and ask his pardon. But a shame well known to sensible and delicate souls, had still withheld her footsteps. If Lisere did not despise her, if he still preserved any feeling for her, any esteem; from the time when she had broken off with her parties, from the time that she had lived retired and solitary, how came it that he had never vouchsafed to see her even once? Every day, as he went by, he enquired after his lady's health; she heard of it; she hoped that at last he would ask to see her: each day this hope was renewed; she expected, all trembling, the moment of Lisere's calling; she drew as near as possible, in order to listen to him, and retired in tears, after having heard him ask, as he went along, '*How does my Lady do?*' She could have wished to have Lisere informed of her repentance, of her return to herself: 'But to whom can I trust,' said she, 'to friends! is there one of them faithful enough, discreet enough, wise enough for so delicate an interposition? Some of them might have the talents but had not

not the zeal; and others had the zeal, but not the talents: besides, it is so hard to trust to others what we dare not confess ourselves! A letter ; but what shall I write to him? General expressions would not touch him, and particulars are so humiliating? At length a thought came into her head, by which her delicacy and sensibility were equally satisfied. Lisere had absented himself for two days, and Lucilia seized the opportunity of his absence to execute her design.

Lisere had an old servant whom Lucilia saw melting into tears at the moment of their separation, and whose zeal, honesty, and discretion, were well known to her. ‘ Ambrose,’ said she to him, ‘ I have a favour to ask of you.’—‘ Ah, Madam!’ said the good man, ‘ command me; I am yours with all my soul: would to God that you and my master loved one another as I love you! I know not which of you is wrong; but I am sorry for you both: it would be delightful to see you together, and I see nothing here which does not give me sorrow, ever since you have been on ill-terms.’—‘ It is perhaps my fault,’ said Lucilia, humiliated; ‘ but my dear Ambrose, the evil is not without remedy: only do what I shall tell you. You know that my portrait is in your master’s chamber.’—‘ O yes, Madam, he knows it very well too; for he sometimes shuts himself up with it for whole days: it is all his consolation. He looks at it, he talks to it, he sighs most pitifully; and I see plainly that the poor gentleman would still much rather converse with you than with your picture.’—‘ You tell me very comfortable news, my dear Ambrose; but go and take away that portrait privately, and chuse, in order to bring it me, a time when you may not be seen by any body.’—‘ I, Madam, deprive my master of all that he holds dearest in the world! rather ask my life.’—Be assured,’ replied Lucilia, ‘ my design is not to deprive him of it. To-morrow evening thou shalt come and fetch it, to put it in its place again: I will only beg of you to say nothing to my husband.’—‘ Very well,’ said Ambrose, ‘ I know that you are goodness itself,

MORAL TALES.

self, and you would not now, at the latter end of my life, give me the mortification of having made my master uneasy.' The faithful Ambrose executed Lucilia's order. She had in her portrait the tender and languishing air which was natural to her; but her look was serene, and her hair set with flowers. She sent for her painter, and ordered him to draw her with her hair dishevelled, and to paint the tears trickling from her eyes. As soon as her idea was carried into execution, the picture was replaced in Lisere's apartment. He comes into it, and his eyes are soon raised on the dear object. It is easy to conceive how great was his surprise. The dishevelled hair strikes him first: he draws near, and sees the tears flow. 'Ah!' cried he; 'ah, Lucilia! are these the tears of repentance? Is that the sorrow of love?' He goes out transported; he flies to her; he seeks her with his eyes, and he finds her in the same situation as the picture had represented her. Immoveable for a moment, he eyes her with tenderness; and suddenly throwing himself at her feet, 'Is it really true,' said he, 'that my wife is restored to me?'—'Yes,' said Lucilia with sighs; 'yes, if you think her still worthy of you?'—'Can she have ceased to be so,' replied Lisere, locking her in his arms. 'No, my dear, be comforted; I know your soul, and I have never ceased to mourn and to esteem you. You would not return to me if the world had been able to seduce you, and this voluntary return is the proof of your virtue.'—'Oh! thank Heaven,' said she, her heart being eased by the tears which flowed in abundance from her eyes; 'thank Heaven, I have no shameful weakness to blush at: I have been foolish, but not dishonest.'—'If I doubted it, would you now be in my bosom?' replied Lisere; and at these words-----but who can describe the transports of two sensible hearts; which, after having groaned under a cruel separation, were re-united for ever. On learning their reconciliation, the family were filled with joy; and the good Ambrose said, his eyes

eyes swimming with tears, 'God be praised! I shall now die content.'

From that day, the tender union of this pair serves as an example to all those of their age. Their divorce has convinced them that the world had nothing that could make either of them amends. and this is what I call A HAPPY DIVORCE.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



